

BOOKS Printed for *W. Taylor*,
at the Ship, in St. Paul's
Church-Yard.

THE Book of *Common-Prayer* and
Administration of the Sacrament of
the Lord's Supper, according to the Use of
the Church of *England*, with the *Psalms*
of *David* Paraphrased: Together with
the *Lives of the Apostles*: And an account
of the Original of the *Feasts and Fasts* of
the Church, with several of the *Rubricks*
occasionally Explained. By *W. Nichols*,
D. D.

— The Author's Conference with
an Atheist, in five Parts: With the rest
of his Works may be had at the same
Place.

A Practical Discourse of *REPENTANCE*,
rectifying the Mistakes about it, espe-
cially such as lead either to *Despair* or
Presumption, perswading and directing
to the true Practice of it, and demon-
strating the Invalidity of a *Death-Bed*
Repentance. By *W. Payne*, D. D. and late
Rector of *St. Mary White-Chappel*. And
Chaplain in Ordinary to their Majesties.

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THREE SHORT TREATISES

VIZ

- I. *A Modest Plea for the Clergy, &c.*
- II. *A Sermon of the Sacerdotal Benediction, &c.*
- III. *A Discourse published to undeceive the People in point of Tithes, &c.*

Formerly PRINTED,

And now again PUBLISHED by

Dr. **GEORGE HICKES,**

In Defense of the

PRIESTHOOD, and *True Rights*
of the CHURCH, against the Slanderous and Reproachful Treatment of the CLERGY, in a late Book of Pernicious and Blasphemous Doctrines, falsely Intituled, *The Rights of the CHRISTIAN CHURCH.*

τὰς Διακονίας μὴ δεξιῶ. Rom. xi. 13.

*Maxima in hominibus sunt dona a superna,
Collata Clementia, Sacerdotium & Imperium,
illud quidem Divinis Ministrans, hoc autem humanis
presidens. Justinian, Novell. Collect. 6.
Præfat.*

London, Printed for W. TAYLOR, at the
Ship in St. Paul's Church Yard, 1709.



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TO THE
READER.

THE first of these excellent
and most useful Tracts,
was Publish'd at *London*
for *William Crook*, at the *Green Dra-*
gon without *Temple-Bar*, 1677.

The second was Preach'd at a Vi-
sitation, *April 14, 1619.* by the
Reverend Mr. *Samuel Gibson*, Mi-
nister of *Burleigh* at *Rutland*; and
Printed in *London*, 1620.

The third was Published at
London by Dr. * *Peter Heylin*, under
the Name of *Phil. Treleine* the Ana-
gram of his Name, 1648, when chan-
ging of *Tithes* into *Stipends* was first
attempted; And afterwards Re-
printed in his *Ecclesia Vindicata*,
1657.

To the Reader.

The Reader may reasonably expect that I should say something of each of these Discourses ; the first and principal of which, wants the name of the Learned and Polite Author, who has taken such care to be concealed, like the Author of *the Whole Duty of Man*, that I have not been able by all the enquiry I could make in *London* or the *Universities*, to come to any notice of him, or know for certain whether he was of the Clergy, or a Layman. Throughout his whole Book he never speaks of the Clergy in the *first person plural*, but often * addresses himself to them in the *second*, and otherwise always speaks of them in the *third*, as if he were none of them ; which one may without any difficulty believe ; because very many Learned Gentlemen of the Laity, true Sons of the Church of *England*, have with invincible strength of Reason, and

* P. 130,
137, 138.

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and great variety of Learning, defended *their Mother* in her Doctrine, Woship, Polity, Discipline, Priesthood and Revenues, against her open and secret Enemies of all sorts and Sects. Such as these were Sir *Henry Spelman*, Sir *Humphry Linde*, Dr. *Rich. Cosens*, Sir *Tho. Ridley*, Sir *Tho. Aston*, Sir *Roger Twisden*, Sir *Henry Yelverton*, Sir *George Mackenzey*, and of late the worthy Mr. *Nelson*, in his *Companion to the Festivals and Fasts of the Church*. In the Front of which Learned Gentlemen, I might upon the account of their Royal Dignity, have put K. *James I.* and K. *Charles I.* Martyr; whereof the one defended the Church of *England* against the *Pope* and the *Puritans*, and the other against the COVENANT and the KIRK.

But this Book, whoever was the Author of it, will be a monument of his praise: For as to the Subject of it, he hath treated *That* in

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all respects suitably to its Nature, and with so much seriousness, gravity, judgment, strength of Reason, and application of Learning, Humane and Divine, that were it not written with an Eloquence, which will please any Reader, it would very well deserve reading in every Chapter, purely upon the account of the Matters contained therein. But then as the judicious Author of it hath been so happy, as to treat his Subject in such manner, as the nature of it did require: so hath he penned his just, and fine Thought upon it in such a *Stile*, as will delight all Readers, but those who hate the Subject he adorns. It is similar, even, flowing, clear, easie, conform to the gravity of his Subject, and the Rules of true Eloquence, neither too high for the Common, nor too low for the Learned Reader, but Compos'd equally to profit both; which

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which one of the best old Writers upon Eloquence tells us, is a Character, and proof of the true *Sublime*.

The Book was brought to me by a very good judge of Books, not long after I had publish'd my *Two Treatises of the Christian Priesthood, and the Dignity of the Episcopal Order, with a prefatory Answer to the RIGHTS*. And * the Worthy * William Gentleman, who did me the favour Longue-ville of the Inner-Temple, Esq; to bring it to me, told me he believ'd it would please me, and he was not out in his Guess; for as soon as I had read it, I resolv'd by God's assistance to give it another Edition, and had I come sooner to the knowledge of it, instead of Writing against the RIGHTS myself, I should have thought it sufficient to Reprint it, with some Application, and Reflections, as an Answer to that insolent Book. Those who will be at so little trou-

To the Reader.

trouble as to Read it, will find it obviate the wicked design of that profane Piece, wherein Men of the basest Interest, and worst Principles, the Sons of *Epicurus*, *Hobbes*, and *Spinoza*, have said almost all that the wicked DÆMONS could inspire them to speak against the *Christian Priesthood*. For I make no doubt to say, but the spite with which they have written against it, proceeds from the very *Dæmons*, who were the Gods of the Gentile World, and who now seek the ruin of the Christian Priesthood and Religion, because it formerly ruined theirs; Christianity as it encreased, having chaced them from Countrey to Countrey, and expelled them every where, not only out of the Bodies of possessed Men, but out of their
* *Oracles and Temples*, and these are the wicked Spirits, that now in revenge to Christ and Christianity, work

* See the
excellent
Answer to
De Fontanelle,
and Vandale, lately
Translated into
pure and
proper
English,
by a learned
Hand.

To the Reader.

work in the Children of Disobedience, and push them on like Furies to assault the Christian Priesthood, and do what the combined Art and Malice of wicked Men, and wicked Spirits can, to drive it, and Christianity with it, out of the World. I have a particular Reason for what I say, not only from the Blasphemies of these Apostates, which I have elsewhere related, but from what I am going to mention of the Writer of the Book of RIGHTS, who affirm'd that *There cannot be any Revealed Religion, and that he did not doubt, but in such a number of years all Men of Sense would settle in Natural Religion.* In saying of this, of which I shall shortly give another and more particular account, he spoke not his own sense only, but that of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, and the rest of the Blasphemers of the *Antisacerdotal* Party; from whose Conversation,
as

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as well as their Books, it is plain, that the extirpation of Christianity is their expectation, as well as their endeavour, *in this their hour, and power of Darkness.* But tho' the Devils are come among us in these Men, and gather themselves together in Battel against Christ, as it were in *Armageddon*, yet it is to be hoped from their great wrath against him and his Kingdom, that whether they believe it or no, *they have but a short time*: For if Men, who should come to the help of our High-Priest, still delay to appear in his defence, he will require it of them, and arise himself in his appointed time to plead his own Cause; and by means best known to his Infinite Wisdom bring his Enemy to confusion, when that shall come upon them, which came upon the unbelieving *Jews*: *Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish.*

It

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It was about the time the *Modest Plea for the Clergy* was first publish'd, that these Enemies of the Priesthood growing numerous, grew also bold and daring ; which I presume might give occasion to our Author to write his Book, to defend the Clergy against them, as well as against the * *Dissenters*, who then * p. 120. were very free, and very injurious in their censures of them, and the *Two Universities*, which I pray God to preserve for ever. It was in the latter end of that year, in which this Book was first Printed, that a *Clergy-man* of my acquaintance walking very fast, happen'd at a corner in *Lincolns-Inn-Fields* to give a great shock to a Gentleman in the very Angle of concurrence, upon which the *Bully* said to him, *you Dog, you damn'd Priest*. But he being not at all discompos'd with his rudeness, laid his Hand on his Shoulder, and said, *Sir, Are you not a Chri-*

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a Christian? If you are, remember your Saviour Jesus is a Priest. To which the Blasphemer replied with a Curse, *I neither care for Him, nor Thee.* This was shortly after the time that Spinoza's Books were brought into England; and what I have related here, was not then the single Blasphemy of one desperate Man, but of an infernal Sect of Apostates now growing up in our Country, and since call'd DEISTS, and now by

Such as
the History of Religion;
Christianity not
Mysterious;
The Reasonableness of
Christianity; An
Account of the
Growth of
Deism;
The Principles of
Protestant Re-

their * Books better known to the World. They would then as boldly, tho' not so openly, ridicule Priests, and Sacraments, and Revealed Religion. Moses and Christ, were then no better with them, than Alexander the Pseudomantis in Lucian; and in Reading the Rights, I observ'd nothing, except the false or abusive Citations of Authors, but what I heard long ago by rebound from

as explained in a Letter of Resolution to a Lady concerning Church-union; The Rights of the Christian Church asserted; A Letter concerning Enthusiasm to my Lord; The Preface before the Vindication of Divine Goodness; not to mention Mr. Blunt's and Hickerlingal's

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To the Reader.

the Blasphemers of Revealed Religion, who then met in Clubs about the Town. To see *Priest-ridden*, and *Priestcraft* so often repeated in one Book ; to see the *Chalice* call'd a *Grace-cup* ; the Consecration of the Elements called *Conjuration* ; and to hear that the *Offertory* of the Communicants, which the Church directs the Priest to place with Reverence on the Holy Table, was called by the Writer of that Book, their *Club* : In short, to see the Scriptures banter'd, the Priestly Office prophan'd, and laid in common to Men and Women ; to see Tithes call'd Robbing of the People, and Priests who take them , represented as Thieves, was no surprise to me, whose Ears had been used to hear of these and many more such Blasphemies, before the Blasphemers durst put them in Print. The Apostate Poet, who did us the honour to forsake our Church ; that great
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corrupter of the Stage, and Age, whose *Apollo* was *Apollyon*, and *Blasphemy* his *Muse*; that *Chairman* in the Meetings of the Scorners, who is gone to give an account of his *Works*, was the first Writer, who took upon him, after the *Restoration*, to bring all the Disgrace his *Muse* or *Malice* could invent upon the Clergy; and at last to tell the World, that *Priests of all Religions were the same*. But since the *Revolution*, they Write in Consort, and their Books are sold as commonly as the *Bible*; which their *Malice* to *Moses* and *Christ*, makes them hope to render as despicable, I say it with horror, as the *Seven Champions*, or *Amadis of Gaule*.

But were not Men, and Women already prepared by profligate Lives, to embrace their Principles, and ease their Minds in them from the Thoughts of *Wrath* to come, their Books would have no other effect

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effect upon their Readers, but to
create Horrour: But since it is the
interest of so many desperate sinners,
to wish that *Religion were nothing
but Enthusiasm and Panick Fear;
the cheat of Priests, upon which
Wit and Satyr is to be let loose to
ridicule it, and make it, if they
could, ashamed to shew its head:
Their Books must be encountred
with serious and solid Arguments;
for let Wit pointed with Satyr do
what it can, Truth and true Reason-
ing will prevail against it; for
though it may, especially in the
cause of Religion, please deprav-
ed Minds, yet all the Sober and
Wise, will prefer Truth and true
Reasonings before it, as much as
Real before Theatrical Pleasures;
or Substantial Riches, before Splen-
did Trifles and Toys. For this
cause I have Publish'd this little
Book, which I desire the serious
Reader to compare with any of
(a) those,

* See the
latter
concern-
ing En-
thusiasm
or Censu-
ra Tem-
porum for
the Month
of August
1708.

To the Reader.

those, which the *Deists*, those *Disciples* of *Spinoza*, have Publish'd from the *History of Religion* to the *Translators Preface* before the *Vindication of the Divine Goodness*, sold by *Mr. Chiswell*, and said in *Shropshire*, to be Written by a *Justice of Peace*, who industriously disperses it in that Country. Let the Reader consider whether this Author or *they* write most like Men and Christians, and upon solid Christian Principles, and most agreeably to the pure Monuments of Primitive Christianity, the Testimony of Martyrs, and the Authority not only of many as great Wits, but as great Scholars for Humane Learning, as the World could shew. Let him set his Scheme and his way of Arguing against *theirs*, and then judge upon which side it is most likely to find Truth; let him put his Arguments in the Scale against *theirs*, and then consider

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consider whether it is possible that the whole *Jewish* and Christian World have been abused by crafty Priests; and particularly as to Christians, whether the Brightest and Wisest Men among them, Emperors and Kings as well as others, have been blind, and lived under the cheat and delusion of revealed Religion for 1700 Years. In particular, let the unpoisoned Reader compare this Book and the sober Reasonings in it, with those of the *RIGHTS* of the *Christian Church*; which is borrowed from *Spinoza's Rights of the Clergy*, and then determine whether he will stick to the *old Men*, and *old Principles*, or to the new; to the Glorious Company of the Apostles, the Goodly Fellowship of the Prophets, the Noble Army of Martyrs and Confessors, and to the *Holy Church* throughout all the World, or to the Apostate *Jew Spinoza*; to the *old Christian*, or the new Anti-

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christian Principles ; to God who made the World, or to the God of *Spinoza*, who is the World ; to Christ or these Antichrists ; to the Christian Priesthood, or to the Satanical Crew who hate it, even in Christ himself. In particular, if he will read no more, let him but read the second Chapter, and seriously weigh it, and the Reasonings and Interrogatories of it in the ballance of Reason against the contrary Reasonings, add hypothesis in the *Rights*, and then tell me, which of the two is the preponderating Scale, that ought to challenge his suffrage and assent. In a word, let him rather have patience to peruse the whole Book, and then unless his Mind is Poyson'd with Infidelity and Malice beyond cure ; unless he is such an one, whose wicked Life, and Blasphemies make him unwilling to believe revealed Religion ; and his spite to Creeds and Creed-makers, as they call

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call Priests, be got above his Reason, and hath reduced him to a Reprobate Mind : I cannot but hope he will give God Praise for it, and when he hath read it, be ready to fall down on his Knees, and say, *Let thy Priests, O Lord! be clothed with thy Salvation ; and those who hate and despise them, with dishonour and shame.*

But on the other hand, if the Reader be not tainted with the execrable Principles of those Men, who are a Dishonour to Mankind, a Plague to their Country, and a Reproach to the Christian name ; this Book, by God's Blessing will be an Antidote to him against the Poison of them, and like his Guardian Angel, secure him against the *Pestilence*, which when it was written, *walked in darkness*, but now *destroys at noon-day*.

Here, and in the Sermon of the *Sacerdotal Blessing* annexed to it, he

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will

To the Reader.

well learn the Nature of the Priests Office, and what his Duty upon the score of that sacred and honourable Character is to a Priest. Here he will see, that a *Priest* is a Person placed in a middle station between God and the People, to mediate for them in Holy Offices; to present their Prayers to God; to offer up unto him spiritual Oblations, and Sacrifices on their behalf, especially at the Holy Altar, and bring down his Blessings upon them. Here he will understand how Mortal Men of the same Passions and Infirmities with himself, become Priests by the Honour of solemn separation unto the Gospel, and God's Service, whereby they are made his Ministers and his Embassadors, to transact with their fellow-creatures by his Order, and in his Name, and that their Function is not of Man nor by Man; but His Ordinance and Institution, who sent *Philip* to Instruct

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struct and Baptize the Believing Eunuch, and warned *Cornelius* to send for *Peter* to Baptize him and all that were present with him, who had received the Holy Ghost. Here he will also find that the Clergy, as Ministers of Christ, have Power from him to bind and loose Sinners; to deliver the Ob-
stinate unto the Power of Satan, and upon Repentance to release them, and restore them to the Glorious liberty of the Sons of God. Here likewise he will find, that no Gifts or Abilities how great soever, whether *Natural*, *Acquired*, or *Inspired*, can entitle to the *Priesthood*, without Ordination; or of themselves any more make a Priest, than a Judge of Assizes, or a General of an Army; For Christ himself our Sovereign Pontif in Heaven; Christ the great Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls, though he had all the gifts of the Spirit without measure, and the fulness of the Godhead dwelling

(a 4)

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dwelling in him, yet he did not advance himself to that Dignity, but was called and exalted thereunto by God, who said unto him, *Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedech.* He was first called, *saith our Author,* and Consecrated by the Holy Ghost, before he became a Preacher of his own Gospel; and according to the Tenor of his own Ordination, he ordain'd the Apostles to be Bishops under him, as he was under the Father, as it is written, *As my Father sent me: So I send you.* They were his *Missioners*, as he was the Father, and as his Father sent him, and he sent them: So they were to send others, and they again others in the same manner of Succession unto the end of the World. To conclude, here he will find it observed, that the Institution of the Priesthood, like the Creation of the World, was the Pleasure of God; that

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that it was by his appointment that one Man Ministers for many, and no less than the resolve of infinite Wisdom to commit the care of Souls to Men and not to Angels, and by his *Immediate*, or *Mediate* call, to send Men of like Passions with their Brethren, and not impassible Spirits, to be Governours and Instructors of his Church.

If Men would have patience to understand and consider these things, they would soon learn to distinguish between the *Man* and the *Priest*, as well as between the *Tradesman* and the *Magistrate* in the City; or in the Kingdom, between the *Man* and the *Prince*: They would then make no more difficulty in Ecclesiastical Stations than in Civil, to Honour the Person, though never so Mean, for the sake of his Office; and be as just and respectful to his Character, as they expect others should be to theirs.

They

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They would not then dare to treat Priests with Contempt, or suffer others so to treat them, especially in *Courts of Judicature*, whither they come with all submission for Protection and Justice. To treat them, or suffer them to be treated in such a manner there is very unequal, and unbecoming Christians, who have a Priesthood at least, as honourable as that of the Jews, and God will require of the Tribunals, all the Contempt, and Reproaches, and Insults *they* suffer there; *they*, who are the Domestick Servants of the most High, and whose Office, which is more than human, is to make Prayers, and Intercessions to God for all that are put in Authority, and to charge the People to render Honour to Judges, and to all to whom Honour is due.

A serious Reflection upon the Priests Office, and the Dignity and Powers thereof, would likewise oblige

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oblige the Noble and the Rich, to treat the poorest and lowest of the Clergy with the same respect, as they are apt to treat the richest and highest of the same Order; and not as too many, perhaps through evil custome more than inclination, are wont to do, at such a distance, and in such a manner, as if they were not worthy to enter under their Roof. Would they consider that the poor undignified, as well as the most dignified Clergymen in the Church, are Servants of the same Lord of Glory, who ought to be equally Honoured in them all without respect of Persons, they would not make such distinction: But so it is, that for want of considering that God hath chosen the Poor of this World, as well as the Rich, for his Priests, they are too commonly guilty of that partiality, which St. *James* reproves in the Presidents of the Christian Synagogues

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gogues, who said to the one sit thou here in a good place, and to the others, stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool. Methinks this Theory of the Priesthood should make them more careful to give that Religious Respect, we call Veneration, to a poor Priest, rather than one who is Rich; because in that case it is *purely* given to him for his Character, and for his Master's sake who will reward it. But the Fashion, Interest, and Craft of a deceitful World is to shew Respect to the Great, and Rich, and *Dignified* of all Professions, so that when a Clerk promoted to the higher Stations in the Church, receives Honour of the People, it is difficult to know, whether it is paid to the *Priest*, or the *Prelate*; to his Office, or his Dignity and Promotion; or to the Man, perhaps because he maketh a greater Figure in the World, than he doth in the Church.

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Church. They should also consider, that the Poverty of the Clergy, for which they despise them, is their Misfortune; and not their Sin, but the Crime of a wicked World, which suffers Sacrilege to devour the Priests Portion; Sacrilege, which still gapes after what it hath not got, and lives upon what it hath got every where in Plenty, if not in Luxury and Grandure upon the Revenues of the Church. One would also think, that this Theory of the Priesthood should oblige the Noble, and the Rich, who take Priests into their Families, not to take them for Fashion, or State, or to encrease the Pomp of their Retinue, which is the chief motive to too many; but purely for the sake of their Office, and to have their Families, like Parishes, committed to them, as their Spiritual Charge and Cure. If they did so, they would look upon

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upon it, as a great Blessing of God, and a pledge of his Favour, that they had faithful Priests in their Houses, and then they would treat them, not as the Servants of Men, but as, indeed they are, the Domestick Servants of God, and Ministers of that High-priest in Heaven, in whose Name they Minister in their Houses, and who is over all; over Angels as well as Men; over the Rich as well as the Poor; over the Noble as well as the Base, *God blessed for ever.* Amen. This they should consider as Christians, and that it is for the Honour and Service of God, and not of Man; for their attendance at the Altar, and not upon themselves, be they never so Great, or near the Throne, that they should be retained by them. Otherwise they had better want the blessing of Priests, than not treat them as their Office, and Relation to God, and

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and Holy Things requires. But to take them, and treat them, or let them be treated in a contrary manner, as if they were to wait at their Tables, rather than Minister at God's, is a contempt of their great Master, for which, without Repentance, he will call them to account. The time will come, when he will say unto them, who so treat them, inasmuch as you did so to one of these, you did it unto me: In despising them, you despised me, who sent them; and him also who sent me. And would our Ladies pretending to Piety, think as justly as they thought of the Evangelical Priesthood, they also would be afraid to make the Ministers of their Devotion wait from the hour of Morning-prayer till the Afternoon; and from the hour of Evening-prayer perhaps till the *Morning-watch*; I say till the *Morning-watch*, and so preposterously end their *Mattens*, when they might

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might begin their *Vespers*; consuming away the precious time for Morning-prayer, in chat at their *Toilets*, talking perhaps all the while about no greater concerns, than *Fashions*, *Dresses*, and other *Trifles*; and perhaps mis-spending the proper time of Evening-prayer yet worse at Play, to which they too attach, and thereby disorder their Minds by the vicissitudes of winning and losing, that God, and his Service is least in their Thoughts. All this while they postpone their Duty to their Diversion, making Christ wait for them in his Minister, and to his dishonour confounding the Hours of Morning and Evening Sacrifice, which *Micah*, a Jew, tho' he had the presumption to make a Priest for himself, durst not have done. He would have thought it almost piacular so to confound the Hours of Morning and Evening Sacrifice, and serve God

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God in such an irregular unprepared manner; and methinks our Ladies, professing Devotion, should do so to, if they really design the attendance of Priests for the Duties of their Office, more than for Shew; for the benefit of Ministerial Worship, and not for State; and wholly for God's Honour and Service, and not to give themselves the greater Airs.

The Nature of the Priesthood, and the Priests relation to Christ, obligeth me to say something to a sort of Men, who though they pretend, and many of them, I believe in good earnest, a Zeal for the Church, yet forget their Duty so much to the Clergy, as to make it their common practice to defame them in general, and by exposing their human passions and infirmities, and reproachful speeches of them, to blast the Reverence which is due to them, and the Reputation of the

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Priesthood more, than *Atheists*, or *Deists*, and all other Enemies of the Church, because they are known Enemies, can do. But I would desire these Gentlemen to consider, that the Honour of God, and all the Interests of Religion suffer in this defamation of our Order, and that the Church her self, for which they pretend so much Zeal, likewise suffers with us; and that to pretend so much respect for the Church, and shew so little to her Clergy, is almost a Contradiction of which they can hardly clear themselves before Men, much less before God, if he should call them to a strict account. They should consider, that as the Catholick Church is one Body over the whole face of the Earth, so is the Priesthood too in the Catholick Church, and that therefore in speaking evil of the Clergy at large, they injure the whole Order, even the whole Body

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of the Priesthood in all Churches, as well as their own, and that Christ, the Sovereign of the Order, shares with them in the general Contempt. If the Wounds which the Churches Enemies give us are grievous, how much more grievous must those be, which we receive from her pretended Friends? Who if they are Persons of liberal extraction and education, should also consider, how Ungentile and Coward-like it is, to throw disgrace upon a Passive Order of Men, who, as my Author observes, are allowed no Weapons but Prayer and Patience; and that I may say nothing more severe, I send them to * him to learn the true Causes* *Cap. xxi.* of that Disaffection and Contempt, which they love to shew towards the Clergy: There they will find the true Reason, why they love to speak against the P A R S O N, and can hardly pronounce that Title of

To the Reader.

Honour without a scornful Smile,
or an accent of Contempt. That
Title of Honour, I say, which the
Canon Law hath given a *Parish-
Priest*, from the *Latin* word
Persona, which signifies *Quality, Con-
dition, State and Dignity*, as where
Cicero saith, *Tueri personam principis
magnum est in Rep.* From whence
every * Head of any Society is said
gerere, or *sustinere personam civitatis*,
in our *English* sense of the Word,
to *personate*, or represent the People
of the Society; and so the *Parish-
Priest*, as the Orator of his Flock,
hath the Honour to *personate*, and
represent them before God; and
what is yet a greater Honour, to
stand before them in the Pulpit,
and at the Altar, in the place of
their Lord, and as his Ambassador,
and Ministerial Vicegerent Priests
or Representatives to speak to
them, and receive their Oblations
in his stead. Wherefore let these
Gen.

* Tull. de
Offic. lib. I
est igitur
proprium
magistra-
tus intel-
ligere se
gerere
personam
civitatis.

To the Reader.

Gentlemen take care, how they sport with the Honourable name of *Parson*, as if it were a name of reproach to a Priest. It is a Sin to do it out of Wantonness, or evil Custom; much more out of Malice to a Priest, or his Office. And our Blessed High Priest, who represents his Church, and, to speak with reverence, is as it were *Hier persona personatus* before his Father in Heaven, shares in the reproach; and let not me be their Enemy, or they mine, because I tell them the truth. Were we of the Clergy, whose most Sacred, and Honourable Titles, these Gentlemen turn into reproach; were we Strangers, and Foreigners, and not their Fellow-subjects; were we not Flesh of their Flesh, and Bone of their Bone, were we not allied to them in the nearest ties of Blood, and natural Relation, and took their Daughters in Marriage, and give them ours; to be

(b 3) as

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as short as I can on such an un-
pleasing subject, were we a sepe-
rate Tribe, as the Jewish Clergy
were, and not taken indifferently
from all Families and Tribes, or
were not the Patrimony of the
Church in reality and effect the
Patrimony of the People, or had
we kept the Scriptures lockt up in
the Originals, or not done all our
Office obliges us to do, to make the
People as knowing as our selves,
then the Revilers of our Order
might have had some colour for
their persecuting of it: But since
we are in all senses their Brethren,
and have the same engagements to
our Country that they have, and
the same obligations to love them,
as they have to love one another,
and since we are also at least as
useful to our Country, as any other
Profession of Men, and that our
Revenues which cost them nothing,
are the Revenues of their Children,
they

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they have no excuse for their unnatural treatment of us : Nor can any rational account be given of it, besides what our Author hath given, viz. That it proceeds from the true Spirit of Persecution, that spirit of Antichrist, which Satan secretly stirs up to destroy the Reputation of the Shepherds, where he cannot destroy their Persons, that he may devour the Flock.

On the other hand, we of the Clergy seeing here, as in a Glass, the Nature of our Holy Offices, the Duty of our Honourable Calling, and the dignity of our Characters, as Priests, should seriously consider, what manner of Persons we ought to be in all Holy Conversation, and Godliness, and that our Light especially ought so to shine before other Men, that they seeing our good Works may glorify our Father which is in Heaven. Certainly it ought to be our endeavour

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to be all Pattern and Example to the People, and our chief care to keep our Character unspotted, not only as Christians, but as Christian Priests, if we desire to glorify God in our Ministry, save the Souls of our People, for whom Christ died, or for that great end would preserve that Reverence we may expect from them, as their Servants for Jesus sake, who hath made us his Ministers of the *New Testament*, and his Vicegerents over his Church. How shall we appear before him with the Blood of Souls upon us, or stand before his Tribunal, when our People are standing there to give Evidence against us, and lay their Damnation to our Charge? With what face can we then look upon our Master sitting as Judge, when we shall hear the People say, that they were wicked by our evil examples; and that our ungodly Lives made them think, that

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that we our selves did not believe the Doctrines we Preach'd; and that our scandalous Conversation drove them from the Temples, and Altars, where we Ministred, and made them loath the Word, and Bread of God? Certainly if the Name of God, and Religion is dishonoured by us, and the People fall by the stumbling-blocks we lay in their way to Heaven, and finally miscarry by our fault; we can, we must expect nothing from our Lord, but the doom of the wicked Servant, to be cast into utter darkness, where there is no comfort, nothing but the utmost misery, nothing but weeping, and gnashing of Teeth. Let us therefore often reflect upon the Sanctity of our Calling, that we may adorn it, and make it venerable by the Sanctity of our Lives. Let us first learn to value, and revere it, and our selves for it, and then our greatest Contemners will

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will soon learn to Reverence both it, and us, and instead of Reproaching, or Blaspheming our Ministry, Glorify God, who hath given such Powers, and Gifts to Men. If we would rightly consider to what, and by whom we are set apart from the World, and whom we represent, and personate at the Holy Altar, we should certainly have such an aw for our selves, as would make others have an aw for us, and treat us as our Character, and Calling requires. Would we strive to live up to our Character, as Persons sepearte from the World in as sepearte, and peculiar a manner of exemplary Conversation, by denying our selves many Liberties, which other Christians not so sepearte, and called, may take without sin, but we cannot take without censure, and exposing our selves, and Office to contempt; then the People would learn

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learn so to account of us, as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God, and have such affection for us, as if it were possible, to pluck out their Eyes, and give them to us. But if we effect the vanities of the World, which the Apostle call the Lust of the Eye, and the pride of Life; if we go into the Desk or Pulpit to be *seen*, as well, as to Pray, or Preach, and Invite those under our Care, and Power, to conform themselves by our example, to the sinful Excesses and Fashions of the Age, which we ought to reprove, and oppose; we shall surely lose the Respect due to our Character, tho' we be free from grosser Sins. When Philosophy was the Divinity of the World, it was thought very unseemly for a Philosopher, and inconsistent with the gravity of his Profession to take all promiscuous Liberties, which other Men did, as to Essence their Hair, carry

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carry a Glass about them, or wear Bracelets and Rings, or go to the Theaters, or lay aside their proper Habit; or if I may use a modish Phrase, where I am chastising *Modes*, to do, any thing, which made them look more like *Beaux*, than Men professing Wisdom, and a contempt of worldly Things: And if to do these things were censurable in *Philosophers*, and exposed them to the contempt of that very World, with whose vain Customs they complied, how much more is the same Liberty censurable in Christian Priests, and disagreeable to their Gravity and Holy Character, which by so doing, they in great measure dishonour and prophane. *Cicero* in his Oration, *pro L. Muræna*, speaks of Dancing, which was objected by *Cato* to his Client, as extremely scandalous to a Consul, and the Consular Dignity, and * elsewhere he looks upon it so indecent for a wise and grave Man

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Man to Dance in the *Forum*, or *Piazza* of Judicature, that he was of opinion he ought not to do it to get the greatest Estate. And in another * place he saith, that as *Sophocles* Ofc. l. r. and *Pericles* being Colleagues in the Magistracy, happened to be together, a beautiful Boy passed by them, whom *Sophocles* Augling, said aloud, *O what a beautiful Boy is there!* whereupon *Pericles* put him in mind of his Character as a Magistrate, and told him plainly, *how it became a Prator to have not only chaste Hands, but unwanton Eyes.* The like he says somewhere else in relation to the Character, and Dignity of a Senator, which shews what regard even the Law of Nature, as we call Right Reason, teacheth us to have to *Character*, and *Calling*; and that the greater, and more venerable any Character is, the more regard is to be had to it, by those who are dignified there-

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therewith. *Is Ordo vitio careto, ceteris specimen esto*, was an old Law of the Romans, made to guard the Dignity of the Senatorian Order. But of all Men, or Orders of Men, it can concern none so much as Priests to preserve their Character in veneration, and especially to take care that they do not expose, or debase it by any unbecoming Liberties; much less by doing things, which every one knows to be Sins. But why do I distinguish here between *Indecencies*, and *Sins*, for the Priest cannot but Sin, who doth any thing unbecoming a Priest to disgrace his Character, or diminish the Honour due to it, tho' perhaps it might not be strictly censurable in another Christian to do the same thing. How were the Jewish Priests circumscribed in their way of living by God himself, that they might not prostitute the Dignity of the Priesthood?

And

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And how the nature of the Priestly Office limits Priests, appears from the first Epistle of the Apostle to Timothy Bishop of Ephesus, whom he charged as a Minister of Jesus Christ to be an example to Believers in Word, and Conversation, in Charity, in Spirit, in Faith, and Purity; and so to demean himself in the Church of God, that no Man might despise his Youth. To this I may add the Apostle's Character of a Priest in the same Epistle: That he must be blameless, *i. e.* free from suspicion of Sin, as well, as Sin it self; the Husband of one Wife, of a sober, modest, or temperate Behaviour; not sordid, or Covetous; patient, and not angry, or contentious; grave, and venerable in the conduct of himself, and government of his Family by exemplary discipline, and not suffering them to take upon them the Airs of a Libertine Age, and run into excesses of Apparel

To the Reader.

parel with a most vain, and sinful World.

These are indeed restrictions, which our Holy Religion, in several degrees, lays upon all Christians, but with greater rigour, caution, and speciality upon Christian Priests. And therefore the Canons of our Church, as our Author hath observed, hath forbidden Clergy-men many Liberties, and degrees of Liberty, which it is not unlawful for other Christians to use. I wish with him we would all consider the mind, and intention of the Ancient Church in her Canons, which forbid her Priests Secular Sports, and Recreations, and all such Conversation, Entertainments and Familiarities, whereby they may occasion the Laity to sin, or be in danger of blemishing their venerable Character, or losing that Reverence to it, which once lost is so difficult to regain. It

was

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was for this end they were so strict to forbid them to haunt Courts, lest Avarice, or Ambition, should tempt those, whose Passions they were, to prostitute themselves, and their Character by Fawning, and Flattering the Great. As it was impossible to prevent Men in whom these passions lurk, from getting into the Holy Orders: So the Holy Fathers found by experience what dishonour was brought both upon the Church, and Priesthood by their servile Methods to get those preferments, which they could not obtain by Worth. For what not only unworthy, but wicked things will not Avarice, and Ambition make Clergy-men, as well as others do. Where those Passions have the dominion among Priests, they will make them abandon themselves to the Politicks of the World, mount by any Methods, tho' never so base, to Preferment,

(c) talk,

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talk, and act forward, and backward, *Winnow*, as *Siracides* saith, with every wind, change Parties, as Parties prevail, Slaunder and Calumniate those, who are out of Power, that they may gratify those, who are in it, and Flatter without common *decorum*, it matters not whom, the lowest for a turn, as well, as the highest, the living, the dying, or the dead. But if the times for Flattery happen to change, they can then as easily invert their *Stile*, and Write the most defamatory Scandals, and bitter Satyrs upon those, upon whom they had composed Panegyricks before. For Preferment is the *Pole* by which they Sail; Simulation the Rudder, by which they Steer, and to sacrifice Honour upon every occasion to Interest, which is so difficult to others, is none to them, who, like the *Sophists*, can speak or write any thing to flatter without blushing:
Flat-

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Flattering Sermons to oblige mighty Men, and Families, and *collect*, and *make* false, and flattering Histories to serve, and humour times. All this, and worse, Avarice, and Ambition will make Men of *Holy Orders* do; even to defame, and blast, as much as they can, the Memories of Martyrs, which is next to a piacle, and then despise Censure, when they think they are got above it, and with the Forehead of her, who *Solomon* saith wipes her Mouth, look round about them with great *Airs* of assurance, as if they had done no such things. It was for this cause, that the ancient Church guarded the Honour of her Clergy against the *Comitatus*, and for the same wise end did the Fathers limit, and circumscribe the Marriage of Clergy-men, and perhaps considering some things which might be mentioned, it would not misbecome the Wisdom, and
(c 2) Piety

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Piety of a Convocation to review those ancient Canons, and consider how far it is fit to receive them, and give them a new Sanction to prevent undecent Marriages, or undecent circumstances of Marriage in the Clergy ; for which our Enemies are apt to ridicule us, and our Order, to the grief, and confusion of our Friends. Tho' I can scarce hope to see such a wise, and prudent Regulation, yet I cannot but wish for it ; for the *pudor Sacerdotii* seems to require it, that our Enemies, who watch at all occasions to reproach us, may have none to expose us as *Psychics*, and reproach us, as *Tertullian* speaks, with the *impudens infirmitas carnis*, which I care not to translate. I would not be so understood, as if I were for the Tyranny of restraining Priests from Marriage ; but it is one thing absolutely to forbid the Marriage of Priests, and another to make

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make decent, and just regulations for it, as my Author saith, *Aliud est auferre, aliud temperare; aliud est legem non nubendi ponere, aliud modum nubendi statuere.*

Having spoken of the Canons of the ancient Church, which for the Honour of the Church and Clergy restrained the Liberties of Clergymen, I cannot but wish, that all Candidates of the Priesthood would acquaint themselves with them, before they go to be Ordained. They are now Epitomiz'd into a small compass, in Mr. Howel's *Synopsis Canonum* lately publish'd at London with Notes; and I cannot but hope, that a considerate perusal of them would make such serious impressions upon our younger Clergy, that none should have any just occasion to despise their youth.

Thus much I have been invited to say by *The Modest Plea for the Clergy*, wherein the Author

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hath so manag'd his whole Apology for us, especially in the Chapters of his enquiry into the pretended and real causes of the Contempt of our Function, as to couch in them many wholesom Admonitions for us, which every serious Clergy-man cannot but apply.

I wish those of the superior Order, who are principally invested with the Power of the Keys, and Censures of the Church, would seriously consider what he hath written in the 13th Chapter, and with an Apostolical Courage, exercise their Apostolick Power, without regard to human Politicks, respect of Persons, or fear of Men, though never so Great. An united resolution among them, or the greatest part of them impartially to execute the Discipline of the Church, would with a little patience, and perseverance recover the just exercise of it; and Discipline

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pline being as necessary for the Church, as any other Society, I think it not only their duty to suffer Persecution in the attempt, but that it would be no less, than Martyrdom to suffer in it to Blood. A Church without Discipline, or an ill exercised Discipline, little better than none, cannot please God, nor him who hath his Seat in the midst of the Candlesticks; and I hope the Governors of the Church, in whose hands the Censures are, will not be angry with me, if I put them in remembrance, that his controversy with most of the VII. Churches, was for want of Discipline; for suffering the Doctrines of *Balaam*, and the *Nicolaitans*, and other pretended false Christians to go uncensured, and the Woman *Jesabel* to seduce his Servants, and for being slack, and lukewarm in Discipline, which is the life and soul of every Church. What Contro-

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verſy then muſt we expect he will have with a Church, who ſuffers worſe than theſe Men; Men who have the ſpite of Devils againſt the Chriſtian Priſthood, and Religion; ungodly Men, who Blaſpheme daily, and vent their Blaſphemies in ſuch Books, as were never heard of, much leſs tolerated in any other times. O Bleſſed Jeſu! not one publick Censure yet of any one of them, or one publick *inquirendum* after the Authors of them. Thou art daily crucified afreſh among us, and worſe revil'd and blaſphem'd, than upon thy Croſs; in thy Perſon, thy Doctrines, thy Sacraments, and thy Prieſts: And yet thoſe, who thus Blaſpheme Thee, are not cut off. And what then can we expect, but that Thou ſhould'ſt forſake thy Spouſe, and that as thou haſt in Judgment already broaken down the Fence of thy Vineyard, ſo thou ſhould'ſt finally lay it waſt? It will

not

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not excuse before good, and wise Men, much less before God, to say *it is not yet seasonable, this is not a time?* What not a time, O Blessed Lord! to shew zeal for Thee, and Thine Honour, and expel those out of thy House, who betray Thee dayly, and are pulling it down, as fast, as they can. O dear Redeemer, the Holy, and the True, who hast the Key of David, and openeth, when no Man can shut, and shutteth, when no Man can open, have Mercy upon thy Church, spare her, good Lord spare her; of thy great Mercy cast her not off, but cast out of her all things that do offend. Give her Priests in all places the spirit of Zeal, Courage, and Might, that they may use the Sword, thou hast put into their Hands, to cut off wicked doers; and Wisdom, Justice and Impartiality, that they may always use it aright. Thy Hand, O Lord of Lords! is not shortned,

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shortned, but thou canst, when thou pleasest, inspire thy Servants with the invincible Spirit of Martyrdom, with the spirit of *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*, and *Babylas*, with the spirit of *Cyprian*, *Gregory*, *John*, and *Ambrose*: O raise up such Fathers every where unto thy Church, for thy own Merits sake. *Amen*.

Many other remarkable things there are in this little Tract: with Clergy-men would all consider what he saith in the Twelfth Chapter, against their mis-spending the Revenues of the Church, and sacrilegiously raising Estates and Families out of them, to equal the Laity of higher Degree. I wish also the *Universities*, and all *Patrons*, would seriously consider what he Writes p. 98, 99. As for *Patronage*, it is originally an honorary, and most sacred Trust, committed to Lords of Lands, who built, or endowed Churches; and their Successors,

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dominate, or present fit, and wor-
thy Priests to *Benefices*; but of whose
fitness, and worth in former times;
the Bishop of the Diocese was sole,
and final Judge. It was so in our
Mother Church of Scotland, where
the Bishop was not accountable for
the reason, why he refused the *Pre-
sentation* to any Church in his District;
and where I believe *Advowsons* to
Benefices were, as at first, appen-
dant to *Manors*, and perhaps are
still so in all, or most other Coun-
tries; and how they became sepe-
rate in *England*, and to be separately
sold, as *Lay-fees*, and to be so re-
cited in Law, I have neither time,
nor skill enough to give a perfect
account. But when, or however the
separation, and by consequence the
selling, and buying of *Advowsons*,
and of the next *Presentations* came
to prevail, the Custom is most cor-
rupt, and sacrilegious, and the
cause of so much *Simony*, and simo-
naical

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naical Bargains, and Contracts, make Religion, the Church, and the Land mourn. There was a corrupt Patron in the West, who offer'd a Rich Benefice to a young Clergy-man, upon Condition of Marrying his eldest Daughter; but he refusing the Condition, the Gentleman found a way to put off two Daughters with the great Living. For a Neighbour of his, who had a Son in Holy Orders, made the Agreement with him, That if he would Present his Son, he should Marry his eldest Daughter, and that he would also give him a certain Summ of Money, as a Portion for the younger, who thereupon was Married to another Man. Such are, and such ever will be the evil consequence of making Advowsons to be *Lay-fees*, and allowing them, and the next Presentations to be sold and bought; and for my own part I cannot conceive how they can

subject

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subject to Sale, or Bargain, any more than other Trusts. If a *Testator* for instance, should leave a Thousand Pounds to be bestowed upon any poor indigent Gentleman, that had a Family of Children, at the discretion, and choice of his Executor, might his Executor sell that *Trust* to another Person, or give him the Money upon a Contract for his Daughter, if he would let his Son Marry her; or upon Bargain, That he would be content to take part, and give him a Receipt for the whole? I have put this query, to set forth the iniquity, of Selling, and Buying Advowsons, and next Presentations, and the baneful effect of them; for as long as they may be *sold*, they will, as experience shews, be *bought*, and then the buyers, or those who succeeded them, will rarely Present but upon some valuable considerations, which is a very baneful corruption

not

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not to be reform'd without a new
regulation of *Patronage*; and which
if not reform'd, will in all ap-
pearance, more and more encreas-
the contempt of the Priesthood, and
by the just Vengeance of Almighty
God hasten the ruin of the Church.
It is therefore to be hoped, by
good Men, who are well-wishers
to the Church, that this mischief
will come under the consideration of our
Legislators; as also what our Au-
thor * wishes enacted for the Honour
of the Clergy, That if any
of them commit a Crime for which
he is to be put to death, or exposed
to publick shame, the Sentence
should not be pronounc'd, at least
the Punishment executed, before
he was degraded by the Bishop, and
his Clergy, that so he might
suffer as a Priest, but only as a
dissevered Malefactor. This respect
to Holy Orders, as our Author ob-
serves, is more ancient, than Pop-

* P. 125

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ry, or any Papal immunity, and
is such altogether, as is suitable to
the Reverence, and Dignity of the
Priesthood, and hath a mighty ten-
dency to the Honour, and Advance-
ment of Religion, and let me add
without offence, perhaps may give
some check to such a Judge, as hath
been known, a veteran hater of the
Clergy, who delighted to Condemn
Clergy-men to the most infamous
sort of publick shame for such Misde-
meanour, as he would not I believe
have Sentenc'd any Dissenting Prea-
cher, or any ordinary Gentleman, or
anyone of his own honourable Profes-
sion, who had been entituled from the
Bar. Indeed they ought to be Crimes
of a very black dye, such as Perjury, or
Forgery, for which a Gentleman, or
other Person of Character in any of
the Three Liberal professions, ought
to be so *Theatrized*. But as for a *Priest*,
whether he is justly or unjustly ; ac-
cording to equity, or against it ;
partially

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partially, or impartially; by a severe, or by a merciful Judge; by one who loves, and honours, or by one, who hates, and despises the Clergy; if he once be made a spectacle of publick shame, I think, unless he suffer as a *Confessor* in *Persecution*, he ought never more to appear in the Pulpit, much less at the Altar, where he is known; but either betake himself to another Country, or Religiously reduce himself to Lay-communion, as I have heard a Pious Minister did, who kill'd a Man *per infortunium*, because his Hands had been stain'd with Blood. If then it would become a Priest, tho' condemn'd to publick disgrace above the demerit of his Crime, to forbear the exercise of his Function, or exercise it at a distance in a strange Country. I think all Priests deservedly condemn'd to an open shame, should be degraded before they undergo

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the Punishment, lest the Reverence of the Priesthood, and Honour of Religion should otherwise suffer with them, not only at the publick place of Execution, but afterwards in the Administration of Holy Offices by such ignominious Persons, as had polluted and profan'd their Character in the Eyes of God, and Angels, as well as of Men.

I have before noted the ill practice of some Lay-Gentlemen, who tho' lovers of the Church, and in the main faithful Members of her Communion, yet give themselves great liberties in speaking of the Clergy: But our Author * takes * P. 124. notice of some of our own Order, who help to encrease the cry against it, and when he wrote, derogated from the Honour of it in such a way of speaking then, as he wonder'd any Priest should be guilty of. But among all the Clergy, as I remember,

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member, there were but two, who were then noted for the libetties they took in exposing their Order. The one was the Author of a little Book entituled, *The Contempt of the Clergy*. In which he expos'd them, and their Preaching with great Raillery, to Contempt, and Ridicule: But tho' he was a Person of great Wit, and Learning, and of most obliging Conversation, and otherwise not of vulgar Merit; yet by the Righteous Judgment of God he lived to be the Contempt of his Order in the Pulpit, and to be sensible of it himself to his great regret. The other was a Person still living, who was famous for his great freedom in Censuring the Clergy; insomuch, that when he pretended sometimes to commend a few of the best, and brightest of them, who were esteem'd the Ornaments of the Church, he was obferv'd to do it with so many *Buts*, and exceptions, that like the ad-

juncts

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junctions, which destroy their Subject, they null'd the praises he pretended to give, and turned them almost into perfect disgrace. I have since seen a short Specimen of an *Anecdote*, in which the Candid Author, besides throwing obloquy, and disgrace upon two Bishops to blast their Names in Ages to come, writes in these Words of the whole Order : *I always believe well of Laymen, till I see cause to change my mind, tho' as to Church-men it is quite otherwise with me ; for I have seen so much amiss in that Profession, that I am always inclined to think ill of them, till I see cause to think otherwise.* One would stand a while amazed at such an Expression from a Priest, and think this Censure of his Order came either from a very depraved Nature, or from a Suggestion of a worse thing, which I will not name. It is worse than the *Stage*, it is the *Rights* all over, who speaking of

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the Clergy saith, *The best Religion hath the worst Priests.* But were I so vain, as to desire to live in History, it should be in this, upon condition the Writer of it would not speak well of me; but ill: For the defamations of such Historians are certain signs of Merit, the dishonourable Characters of such vile Pens, are true marks of Honour; and their Praises, and Panegyrics, like the Pillory, are Infamy, Scandal, and Disgrace. So will jealous and inquisitive Posterity think of the Characters in this *Anecdote*; they will interpret them all whether good or bad, by the *Rule of Contrary*; they'll believe nothing upon the bare report of the Author, but be apt to think ill of those of whom he speaks well, and well of all of whom he speaks ill.

I now proceed to say something of the other two Tracts, which I have published with *The Modest Plea*

for

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for the Clergy, and of the Reasons, for which I have sent them to attend it at its second appearance in our *English* World.

As for the Sermon of the Sacerdotal, or Ecclesiastical Benediction, it is such a clear, and solid proof from Scripture, That *Priests are an Order of Men appointed by God to pray for the People, and bless them*, that I could not but joyn it with *The Modest Plea*, in which that Doctrine is only asserted, because it was not the Author's design or business to prove it, or enlarge upon it, but to presuppose the truth of it, as a *Principle* received by all Christians, and Christian Churches, which needed no proof. It shews what special effects the Sacerdotal Blessing hath not only upon publick Assemblies, but private Persons, and I hope it will be of particular use to make those Men of *Latitude*, both among the Clergy,

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and People consider, who undervalue the blessing of the Superior Order, speaking of it only, as of a Customary Complement, which signifies nothing, and therefore had better be disused. *None*, said one, *but Fools, and Children will ask a Bishop Blessing*: Which yet the Greatest, and Wisest of Christian Emperors would bow their Heads to receive. O Blessed Jesu! unto what Times hast thou reserv'd us? * wherein the Orders of the Clergy are asserted to be invented by Crafty Priests to ride the Laity; that no performance of theirs is more effectual to recommend Men to God, than if perform'd by Lay-men; that there is no particular form of Church Government, but that Christians are wholly at liberty to form themselves into such Societies, and appoint such Officers, as they think most suitable to Time and Place, and the Honour of God. That the Succession of Bishops is a Succession of Spiritual

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* Translators preface before The Vindication of the Divine Goodness.

To the Reader.

Mammalukes; and what is most remarkable as to the Clergy, that their Moderation, especially that of our Bishops, together with her Majesty's Declaration to assert the just Rights of the Crown, and the Rights of the Christian Church, have made it evident, that we do not account any set form of Government to be a part of the Christian Religion. It would become the wisdom of the Convocation to make enquiry, who of either Order amongst the Clergy, are arriv'd to this Latitude, which their worst Enemies the Deists miscall Moderation. I am confident they would find very few, and those such as would appear to be the scandal of their Order, and as rank Atheists, or Deists, as any of the Spinoza-Clan.

As for the Discourse of instructing, and undeceiving the People in point of Tithes; I was moved to Publish it with *The Modest Plea*, because the

To the Reader.

* P. 51, 52. Author of it * having but briefly, and by the way spoken of the Subsistence, which the bountiful Wisdom of the Almighty hath provided for the Clergy, I thought it very seasonable to let it go abroad attended with such a plane, and useful Discourse, especially in these licentious times; when all the Enemies of the Church, and Priesthood in all places are now striving together in their several Methods, tho' in one Sacrilegious Design, to take away their Maintenance, and Support. Every one knows the false Principle, tho' they may not discern the true Design, for which the *Quakers* deny to pay Tithes, and with what Impudence they not long ago presum'd to represent them-

† *A brief account of some severe prosecutions in the Court of Exchequer against several of the people called Quakers, for the Non-payment of Tithes, humbly presented to the Queen in Parliament.*
 M DCC VI.

im-

To the Reader.

impartial justice against them, as
against other Subjects of the Realm,
when they come for justice to that
Honourable Court. Various still are
the Projectors among the People,
who are for the old enterprise of
changing of Tithes into Stipends. The
Covetous, and Mammonists are for
it, because by this means they hope
to share them with the Clergy.
The Politicians, who would have
the Clergy mere Tools of State,
and the Pulpits *Philippize* at their
pleasure, they also must be for it,
and all sorts of Sectaries, who form
themselves into Religious Societies
against the Priesthood, they also will
joyn in this Sacrilegious Project, de-
siring as much, as the *Atheists*, and
Deists to see Holy Orders extin-
guish'd, and not a Priest left upon
the face of the Earth. For this
Reason especially they cry up *the*
Rights, which tells the People, That
the Clergy ought to live of their
Alms,

To the Reader.

Alms, and that Tithes are Robbery, and that nothing is more effectual to keep them within bounds, than the fear of having a Staff, and a pair of Shoes laid at their door. This is in other Words, the old design of changing Tithes into Stipends, which the Spinozists of all other enemies of Priests wish to see done. It is a great instance of Impudence, or Ignorance, as well as Malice in their Writer of the Rights to call Tithes Robbery. For by the received Maxims of the Civil Law, of which he is a Doctor, they cannot be * alienated or detained, if they are of Divine Right; but on the contrary the alienation, or detaining of them must be Robbery, and that of the most direful sort, *sacrilege*. But setting aside the Divine Right of Tithes, upon which Principle the Ancient Christians paid them, and their Offering to the Priests, there was never any thing capable of hu-

* Nullius
autem
sunt res
Sacra &
Religiosa,
& Sancta.
Quod e-
nim Divi-
ni Juris
est, id Nul-
lius in bo-
nis est.
Inst. Li. II.
Tit. 7.

To the Reader.

man Sanction, which is more universally enacted than the payment of Tithes, not only by our Laws and the Canon Law of the Church, but by the Civil Law of the Empire, and by the feudal, or mixt Laws of all the Kingdoms, which rose out of its ruins, as fast as they turn'd *Christian*; and in particular by the Common, and Statute Laws of our own Country. Let him Read this Discourse written by a Sequestred Priest, and then if he hath any the least remains of Modesty left, let him give himself Confusion. And to say nothing of *Tillesly*, *Nettles*, *Montague*, *Sempil*, and *Spelman*, let him, if he dares look Law in the face, cast his eye upon **THE CIVIL RIGHT OF TITHES**, written by another Learned Priest, * *Chr. El-* * *Athen.*
derfield, M. A. Printed at London in *Oxon.*
such times, as the *Miscroyant* wishes Vol. II.
in his heart to see come again upon p. 92, 93.
the Church.

God

To the Reader.

God is my Witness, it is out of pure Charity to the People, and regard to their Souls, as well, as to the Priesthood, of the Honour of which I count my self unworthy, that I have revived this Discourse, which was written to undeceive them, and annexed it to the *Modest Plea*. And considering the daily encrease, and numbers, and variety of the Enemies of Priests, and of Tithes, as due to them, I think it, as needful to be Published now as in 1648. when it first came abroad. And for the same Reason I have also at the end of this Preface added another Paper of *Queries* about *Tithes*, Printed at London with this Title, *An Item for Sacrilege*, 1653. It was in this year that Cromwell, after his Dissolution of the RUMP of the execrable Long Parliament, Summon'd a number of persons first in the Council Chamber at Whitehall, and then in the House of

Com-

To the Reader.

Commons, where they took upon them the name of a Parliament, and chose Mr. Rouse for their Speaker. This worthy *Mock-Parliament* it was, which out of spite to the Clergy made that famous Act for Marriages by *Justices of Peace*. After which they fell to debates, for taking away *Tithes*, and selling the *Universities Lands*, to which a great number of them gave their Votes, Arguing against the Ministerial Function, as Antichristian, and Burdensome to the People. It is the spirit of these Men, the very spirit of *Barebones*; from whom that Parliament was Nick-nam'd; that very *Priest*, and *Tithe-bating* spirit, by which the Book of the *Rights* was written, and which still acts, and is still suffer'd to act in the Disciples of *Spinoza*, who as I hear, are going to the Press again. But tho' by the just Judgment of God for our Sins, and the Sins of the People,

To the Reader.

People, they seem to look upon us as their prey; yet let us not fear them, but be of good courage, and quit our selves like Men. For as our Orders, and Calling, as well as our Religion, are of God: So by his assistance we shall overcome them, because Heaven is as much stronger, as it is higher than Hell; and he that, I trust, will be with us, is greater, than he that is in them. They go roving and roaring about like their Master, seeking whom they may devour. They spare no cost in buying and dispersing the Books they get written to poyson the World at home, and abroad, especially among the Great. They defend, and support every thing, that any way reflects upon Priesthood, or is prejudicial to the Truth, or Honour of Revealed Religion, as the late pretended Prophets. In a Word, they are very diligent in diffusing their Poyson by Word, and Writing,

To the Reader.

Writing in several Compositions,
and in commending every Blasphemous Print, that ridicules Inspiration, the mysteries of Faith, and the whole System of the Christian Religion. Thus the Writer, who rather deserves to be stiled *Patcher* of the *Rights*, hath made it his business in all Places, particularly in the *University*, to commend, and recommend * the late *Letter about* *Enthusiasme*, more especially to the younger Students, telling them, that he hath Read it over I know not how many times: Thus is the Kingdom of Satan united against us, and one evil *Demon* assists another in their endeavours to subvert the Kingdom of God. It therefore concerns us of the Clergy jointly, and severally to consider with the greatest seriousness, and impartiality what the Causes are, which hath provoked God to suffer these Men, these full of Subtilty, and Malice, so

far

* See the solid, and ingenious Answer to this execrable Pamphlet, In Censura Temporum, for the Month of August last.

To the Reader.

far to prevail against us. It is certain we have lost a great share of that general respect, we had from the People not many years ago, and should God in Anger suffer the Enemies of the Priesthood to go on unchecked with like encouragement. Twenty years to come, I know not but they may have occasion to tell us, as a Christian Priest of the greatest Wit, and Human Learning told the Magistrates of the unconverted Empire: * *Hestorni sumus, & vestra omnia implevimus; urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa decurias, palatium, Senatum, Forum.* And that we on the contrary may have occasion to take up the complaint, and put up the sorrowful Prayer of the Psalmist, *Ad te levavi oculos meos.* Nay, I think we have reason enough already to say with him, *Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we are utterly despised. Our soul is filled with*

*Tertul.
Apol. 37.

To the Reader.

the scornful reproof of the wealthy, and with the dispitefulness of the proud. Wherefore let us with most serious Reflection upon our selves, consider by what mis-doings we have so offended God, as to provoke him to suffer his and our greatest Enemies thus to insult us, and make us so contemptible, and base before the People, as once he did the *Jewish Priests*, when he told them, *He had no pleasure in them, nor would accept any offering at their hands.* Let us all repent of all our Sins, and make humble addressees daily unto God for Pardon, and then he will return to us, and give us the Victory over the Champions of the *Philistins*, and make Us, and our Profession venerable in the eyes of those, who now most despise, and hate both it, and us.

Before I conclude, I think fit to advertise the Reader, That this small Collection which I have un-

To the Reader.

undertaken to Publish, is but an Harbinger to a greater, which will be undertaken in several Volumes of choice Collections of Tracts, and Papers formerly Printed, in defense of the Church of *England* against her Adversaries of all sorts, from the time of the Reformation to that of the Revolution. It will be undertaken, if it find encouragement, by a Learned, Diligent, and Judicious Hand. And I think nothing can tend more to the Honour of the Church of *England*, than to shew how bravely she hath been defended by her Champions of the *Clergy* and *Laity*; many of whose excellent Tracts will in a little time be as if they had never been, unless raised from dust and oblivion by new Editions. But a *Bibliotheca* in Volume after Volume will preserve them, like many of the lesser Fathers in *Bibliotheca Patrum*, or like the many several noble Treatises of
the

To the Reader.

the *Civil Law* perpetuated in the several Volumes of *Tractatus Tractatum*. Thus about LX. Learned Critical Tracts upon Texts and Passages in the *Bible* are preserved for the Honour of the several Authors, and the Benefit of the Christian World in the two last Volumes of the *English Criticks*; and how many Tracts relating to *Greek*, and *Latin* Learning are restored to the present and future Ages, in the late Collections of the *Greek*, and *Roman Antiquities*, I need not tell the Learned World. The several Discourses Printed about Five and twenty years ago by the *London Clergy* against the *Dissenters*, would in time have been as quite lost, had they not been so Collected into one Volume. Before they were written, our Ecclesiastical Superiors called us together, and allotted every one his Subject. This I presume to mention, humbly to put the present

To the Reader.

Superiors of that Venerable Board in remembrance with what Honour to themselves, and Success in the undertaking, they might call them together again now, and according to every Man's Talent, appoint him his part in Writing against the common Enemies of Christianity the *Deists*, upon their several Principles; as the Governors of the Church before also appointed *Nettles*, *Tillesley* and *Montague* to the confusion of Mr. *Selden*, to Write against the *History of Titbes*; to which, tho' he only put his Name, yet the Work, like the Book of the *Rights*, * was *Patch-work*, or the Collection of many Hands.

* Heylin's
Hist. of
Presbyte-
ry, Lib. XI.
p. 391.

But saith my Author in the Margin, He was so Galled by *Tillesley*, so Gagged by *Montague*, and Stung by *Nettles*, that he never came off in any of his undertakings, with more loss of Credit. But to return from this, I hope, pardonable innuendo, and digression,

To the Reader.

gression, What are the larger, and more voluminous Works of the *Greek*, and *Latin* Fathers, but Collections of their Letters, Sermons, and little Tracts upon several subjects? It is therefore to be hoped that all Learned Ministers, and Members of the Church of *England* will be willing to forward, and promote the *Collections*, of which I have spoken: They will not only be everlasting Monuments for the Honour of the Church, but give a check to that destructive spirit of *Latitude*, by which the *Free Thinkers*, and Men of *Large Thoughts*, as they call themselves, have gone from the Doctrines, upon which Christianity, both as a Sect, and Society is founded, and made the way, as *broad* and *wide* as it can be made that leadeth to destruction, and many more now than ever there be, who enter in thereat. They will also in one particu-

To the Reader.

lar respect be very beneficial to the Clergy, who have so much Work, besides what proceeds from their respective Cures, upon their hands, that, as I could shew by many instances, they would save them, and other Learned Men, the Labour of Writing New Books, which they will find have been written in the same Controversies, and on the same Subjects heretofore, by way of Answer, and Reply in defense of the Church, and the Primitive, and Catholick Doctrines thereof.

AN
ITEM
AGAINST
SACRILEDGE:
Or, Sundry Queries concerning
TITHES.

I. **W**Hether the Ministry of ^{See Sir Henry Spelman's} England hath not as ^{Councils.} good a Propriety in ^{Anno 855.} Tithes, as Noblemen, Gentlemen, and Free-holders have in their Lands? The Reasons of this Query are,

1. Because *Ethelwolph* Son of King *Egbert* (who had brought the *Saxon Heptarchy* into a *Monarchy*) had all the Lands in *England* for his *Demesne*, as is acknowledged by *Sir Edward Cook* in his *Commentaries upon Littleton's Tenures*, and conferred the

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An Item against Sacriledge: or,

the Tithes of all the Kingdom upon the Church, by his Royal Charter dated *Anno 855.* in these words, *King Ethelwolph by the consent of his Prelates and Princes which ruled in England under him in their several Provinces, did enrich the Church of England with the Tithes of all his Lands and Goods by his Charter Royal, &c.* Adding in the end, *That who so should encrease the Gift, God would please to prosper and increase his days: But if any should presume to diminish the same, that he should be called to an account for it at Gods judgment seat, &c.* And this he did not only as Lord Paramount, but as Proprietary of the whole Land, the Lords and Great Men at that time, having no Property or Estates of Permanency, but as accountants to the King; whose the whole Land was, and yet they also gave their free consents, which the King required, that thereby they might be barred from pleading any Tenant-right; as also to oblige them to stand in maintenance of Tithes against any Pretenders.

2. Because the People can have no Right or Property in them; for they never bought or paid for them: Neither could they come by Inheritance; for that which was not their Fore-fathers could not descend to them: Neither

came

certain Queries concerning Tithes.

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ame they to them by Donation, which they can never shew.

2. Whether it be agreeable to Piety, Prudence, Justice and Equity to alienate Tithes from the Ministry, which have been so freely given by our own Christian Kings, out of Zeal to advance God's Glory, confirmed by many Acts of Parliament, oft times renew'd and reiterated, as by *Magna Charta* thirty times confirmed, and many other Statutes since, yea by the Text, and Body of the Common Law, which affirms Tithes to be due, *Jure Divino*, as Sir Edward Cook testifies in the *second part of his Reports*.

3. Whether the inconveniency and evils can possibly be foreseen, which will ensue upon the Alteration of such Fundamental Laws of this Nation, as have continued in force through all changes for above a Thousand years together?

Tithes have been given to the Church, for maintenance of God's Word and Ministers, with a Curse to all such as should alienate them.

4. Whether it is agreeable to Piety and Prudence to pull them from God, to end them from his Church, to violate the Dedication of our Fathers, the Oaths of our Ancestors, the Decrees of so many Parliaments, and to expose our selves to those

those horrible Curses which the Body of the Nation hath obliged it self to, in case they consented to the alienation of the same? as *Nehem. 10. 32, &c.*

Orig.
Hom. II.
in Num.
Cypr.
Epist. 66.

5. Whether it be not more than probable that the Ministry hath had a propriety in the Tithes in all Christian Churches, ever since Christians had a Propriety in their Estates; since *Tertullian* in the Second, and *Origen* in the Third Century, tell us, that the community among Christians was not wholly ceased in that time, and yet where it was, the Tithes were paid?

6. Whether it be not Sacriledge to alienate Tithes from the Church, having been dedicated and consecrated unto God, either by the voluntary consent of Churches or by Donation of Princes. Seeing what is voluntarily consecrated by Man, is confirmed by God, and may not be alienated, *Levit. 27. 14.* which Law is the same under the Gospel as appears in the example of *Ananias* *Acts 5. 3.* whom *Peter* Arraigns, and God Condemns for this very Sacriledge, *Wast thou (said Peter) kept back part of the price of the Land? Whilst it remained (viz. unsold) was it not thine own? after it was sold, was it not in thine own Power? viz. to have consecrated or* consecrated

certain Queries concerning Tithes.

5

consecrated it, v. 5. *And Ananias hearing these words, fell down and gave up the Ghost.*

7. Whether it is not against the light of Nature, and custom of all Nations, to disannul the *Will* of the Dead? *Gal. 3. 5. Brethren, I speak after the manner of Men, though it be but a Man's Covenant (or Testament) yet if it be confirmed (viz. by the Death of the Testator) no Man disannulleth it, i. e. no Man ought to disannul*

8. Therefore Tithes having been given by Testament, confirm'd by the Death of the Testators, Is it not against the light of Nature, and custom of all Nations to alienate them? *Heb. 9. 16, 17. For a Testament is of force after Men are Dead.*

8. Many Impropropriations having been restored to the Church by Godly Noblemen and Gentlemen, and others having been brought in and settled in the most legal way that could be devised upon the Ministry; Is it not against all Justice and Equity to take them from the Church again? And will it not discourage all Men for the future from works of Piety and Charity, when they see them thus perverted?

9. Whether it be not more than probable that there was a positive Precept given by God to the Fathers, for the giving to him the Tenth part of their Subitance, as

as he had formerly required the Seventh part of their Time? And whether do not the examples of *Abraham* and *Jacob* so readily giving their Tenth, evince this? Or without such a Precept, Had it not been Will-worship in them? And do not such positive Precepts (if unrepealed) bind all to the end of the World? as we see in the case of the Sabbath.

10. Whether Tithes, as an honouring of God be enjoyn'd in the first Commandment? As they tend to preserve the Publick Worship of God, in the second and fourth Commandment? And as maintenance to the persons of Ministers in the fifth Commandment? being part of the Honour due to Spiritual Parents.

11. Whether Tithes can be called *Antichristian*, which were paid so long before *Antichrist* time? And when *Antichrist* [the Popes of Rome] where the first that durst take upon them to alienate them from the Church, by granting Exemptions, Appropriations, &c. thereby Robbing the Church and Parish Ministers, to gratifie the Monks and Friars. And whether *Alexander* of *Hales*, and *Thomas* of *Aquin* (who lived about Four Hundred years ago) were not the first that pleaded for these alienations made by the Pope? And whether they were not

This also
is justified
by Bellarm.
de clericis.
l. 1. c. 25.

certain Queries concerning Tithes.

7

The first that, to justify the Popes proceedings, pleaded that Tithes were Jewish?

12. Whether these Scriptures do not concern Christians, as well as they did the Jews?

Prov. 3. 9, 10. Honour the Lord

with thy substance, and with the first fruits of

thy increase: So shall thy barns be filled

with plenty, and thy Presses shall burst out

with new wine. Prov. 20. 25. It is a snare

to devour that which is Holy, and after the

to make enquiry. Prov. 23. 10, 11.

Remove not the old Land mark, and enter

into the field of the fartherless: For their

deemer is mighty, and he shall plead their

case with thee. And Sir Edward Cook

in his Institutes, Our Law-books

Instit. 2.

teach us, that the Church is ever under-

c. 1.

age, and to be as a Pupil

and Fatherless: And that it is not agree-

able to Law or Right that such should

be dis-inherited. Mal. 3. 8, 9, 10, &c.

Will a Man rob God? yet ye have robbed me:

ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee?

Tithes and in Offerings, ye are accursed

with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this

whole Nation. Bring ye all the Tithes into

my storehouse, that there may be meat in mine

house, and prove me now therewith, saith the

Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the win-

dows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing,

there shall not be room enough to receive

it:

8 *An Item against sacriledge: or,*

it: And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruit of your ground, neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts: And all Nations shall call you blessed: And ye shall be a delightful Land, saith the Lord of hosts.

2 Cor. 3.
6, &c.

13. Whether those Texts in the New Testament do not prove, that to Gospel Ministers belongs as large, if not larger maintenance than to the Levitical Priesthood, as their Ministry is more excellent, and the blessings conferred thereby are greater. Luke 10. 7. *The labourer is worthy of his hire.* 1 Cor. 9. 4. *Have we power to eat and to drink.* ver. 6. &c. Only Paul and Barnabas, have not we power to bear working? Who goeth to warfare at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruits thereof? Or who feedeth a flock and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a Man? or saith not the Law the same? For it is written in the Law of Moses, *Thou shalt not muzzle the Mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the corn.* Doth God take care for the Oxen? Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt it is written that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have

certain Queries concerning Tithes.

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unto you spiritual things, Is it a great
thing if we shall reap your carnal things?
13, 14. Do ye not know that they which
minister about holy things, live of the things
of the Temple? And they which wait at the
altar, are partakers with the Altar? Even
so hath the Lord ordained that they which
preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.
Gal. 6. 6. Let him that is taught in the word
communicate to him that teacheth in all good
things. Phil. 4. 17. Not that I desire a gift,
but I desire fruit that may abound to your ac-
count. 1 Tim. 5. 17, 18. Let the Elders
that rule well be counted worthy of double
honour, especially they who labour in the Word
and Doctrine. For the Scripture saith, Thou
shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the
corn: And the labourer is worthy of his re-
ward.

14. Whether to speak of a sufficient
maintenance without Tithes, be not a
meer fancy, that never was, nor (as I
believe ever will be brought into action?
And whether it would not trouble the
Wise Men that are, to name a stipend
that would be sufficient at all times, as
Tithes are; which proceeding from the
Wisdom of God, cannot be matched,
much less bettered by Man's Wisdom?

15. Whether be not Tithes the fittest
maintenance for the Ministry, seeing
hereby

hereby they partake with the People in times of Plenty, which will more enlarge their Hearts in Thankfulness; and suffice with them in times of Scarcity, which will more effect them with sense of Gods Judgements? for that when natural affections concur with spiritual, they are more active and vigorous.

16. Whether the practice of the Heathens, which use to give a Tenth to their Gods, will not rise up in judgment against Christians, if they rob God of the Tenth which their Predecessors have given him?

17. Whether the judgment of so many eminent Divines as have held it Sacriledge to alienate that from the Church which was once consecrated to God should not lay a restraint upon all Men from practising that which is so hazardous and scandalous? That it is Sacriledge, is the judgment of *Calvin, Polanus, Keckerman, Perkins*, with many others.

18. Whether all or most of the Arguments bent against the morality of Tithes do not equally militate against the morality of the Sabbath? as Doctor *Sclater* hath shewed in his Parallel in the end of his Book of Tithes.

*Certain Queries concerning bringing
Tithes into a Common Treasury, and
reducing Ministers to Stipends.*

I. IF Tithes should be brought into a common Treasury, and Ministers paid out thence, whether would our Country-men, that say Tithes are such an intolerable burden, be any whit eased? Yea would they not be more burdened by how much their Tithing would be looked more narrowly into?

2. Would not the trouble of Ministers be far greater, being enforced to send or go from Market to Market for every Bushel of Corn or Malt, &c. that he spends in his House?

3. If a dearth come, would it not tend to the ruine of Many Ministers Families, who will be forced to spend more in a quarter than they receive for their half years allowance?

4. If things should rise in the price the next Hundred of years as they have done the last, how shall Ministers be then able to live upon these Stipends?

5. How many Officers must there be employed in every County to bring the Tithes into a common Treasury, all which,

(f)

either

either in whole or in part, must be maintained out of them? And how will this curtail the Ministers share?

6. What attendance must Ministers give quarterly, or each half year, upon the Trustees or Treasurers in every County, till they have list or leisure to pay them? What trouble, journies and expences will this put them to? How will they be enforced to bribe, and pay for expedition, or to be fobbed off with base and clipt Money? or to be forced to take Wares for their Money, if the Treasurers be Tradesmen; as many have been served of late in the case of Augmentations?

7. Will not Ministers hereby be cast upon tentations, to speak only pleasing things (like Trencher-Chaplains) lest their stipends should be taken from them?

8. Can it be expected that Ministers can or will be so liberal to the Poor, and given to hospitality when they buy all with the Penny, as when they have it in Tithes?

9. Will not such as bear the Bag, and upon whom the Ministers must depend for their subsistence, Lord it over them with pride and contempt enough? as bad, or worse than the Bishops and their Chancellors did?

10. Though

10. Though such as are of the best repute in each County should be chosen out to be the Treasurers, yet do we not see by the daily experience, how Men are mistaken in judging of the honesty of others? And how many Men fall from their former principles of Honesty? and that if neither of these should be so, yet how apt standing Waters are to putrify?

11. If contentious suits have been betwixt Ministers and People about Tithes, hath it not for the most part arisen from the peoples covetousness, pretending customs, prescriptions, or compositions, to defraud the Ministers of their due?

12. Were not Patrons at the first made choice of to defend the Ministers right against the fraud and injustice of the People? And may not the Wisdom of the Parliament find out the same, or some such like course, whereby the Minister shall neither be engag'd in contentions with his People, nor troubled with avocations from his Study thereby?

13. May there not arise as many or more quarrels in case Tithes be brought into a common Treasury, whil'st some pretend Conscience, and so will pay none at all; others think themselves over-rated; others think that the Tradesman, who gets more by his Shop than they do

by the Plough, should bear an equal share in this common burden? And who then shall take course to enforce such to pay? If the Treasurers in the Country, surely they will prove but cold Solicitors in anothers cause. But suppose they do stir, they must spend out of the common stock, and such Suits being like to be many, especially in such times as these, how will the Ministers stipends be curtail'd thereby? Besides, may it not be supposed, that they which spend of other Mens Purfes, are like to cut large Thongs out of others hides?

14. If the Country-man shall pay a rate in Money for his Tithes, will it not come far more hardly from him? even like drops of Blood, Money being usually very short with them. And will he not think it far easier to part with a cock of Hay, or a sheaf of Corn, or such a small thing, than to part with so much Money as his whole Tithes may come to, once or oftner in the year? And how little will he think himself eased hereby?

15. If Tithes be brought into a common Treasury, when a Living is worth Two or Three, or perhaps Four Hundred Pounds by the year, a great part of it will be disposed of to other places, and will it not certainly be a great grief to the People,

certain Queries concerning Tithes.

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le, that their Tithes shall go to they
now not whom? certainly to such as
either feed their Souls with the bread of
life, nor their Bodies with the staff of
bread? And will not their Poor want that
relief, and themselves that entertainment
which they used to have at their Mini-
sters House, to the aggravation of their
content?

*certain Queries concerning our late Pe-
titioners against Tithes, and an
imposed Maintenance.*

WHether have we not cause to su-
spect, that those Persons which
petition against Tithes and an imposed
Maintenance, are acted by Jesuits, who
sneakingly creep in amongst them, seek-
ing hereby to overthrow the *English* Mi-
nistry, which hath so strongly oppos'd
them, both by word of Mouth and Wri-
tings? And the rather, because of that
Scottish Jesuite, who lately turn'd Ana-
baptist, and upon examination at New-
castle confessed that he was sent over for
that end. Besides some other like exam-
ples which might be easily produc'd.

I have
good in-
formation
that there
are lately
come over
100 Jelu-
its that
have their
frequent
meetings
in London
to drive
on this
design,

2. Whether

2. Whether can such Petitioners be rightly stiled the godly and well-affected of the Nation, who strive hereby to bring the greatest Judgment upon the Nation, that ever did, or can possibly befall it? *viz.* A Famine of the Word, *Amos* 8. 11, &c. And the removing of our Teachers into corners, *Isa.* 30. 20

3. Whether have we not cause to believe that the far greatest part of the Gentry, Yeomanry and Commons of the Land, that have Tithes to pay, are desirous to have them continued to the Ministry: Seeing so many Thousands of them out of a few Counties petitioned the late Parliament for the same? And no doubt but many Thousands more out of every County would do the like, if they had the least encouragement thereunto.

4. Whether if Tithes were wholly taken away, would the generality of the People be at all eased, seeing both Purchasers and Tenants must pay so much the more for their Land?

5. Whether can we imagine that the Parliament, that hath so lately declared to the world, *That they will be exceeding tender of every ones Liberty and Property*, will now so soon after take away the Propriety of all the Ministry of *England* at one blow, to the ruine of so many thousand

certain *Queries concerning Tithes.*

171

ousand Families for the present; to the discouragement of Parents from bringing their Children to the VVork of the Ministry for time to come, and so to the endangering of the removal of the Gospel amongst us?

6. VVhether would not these Petitioners (if Tithes were removed) cry out and complain as much of the tyrannical oppression and burden of Rents, as the Anabaptists in Germany did, and so never be quiet till they have levelled all things?

—*Si non profunt singula multa juvant.*

F I N I S.

There is lately Publish'd,
A Thorough Examination of the
false Principles and fallacious
Arguments, advanc'd against the
Christian Church, Priest-hood, and
Religion: In a late pernicious
Book, ironically Intituled, *The
Rights of the Christian Church Asserted,
&c.* In a Dialogue between *Demas*
and *Hierarcha*. Humbly Offered
to the Consideration of the
Nobility and Gentry of *England*.

6 AP 58

A
Modest Plea
FOR THE
CLERGY;

WHEREIN
Is Briefly considered, the Ori-
ginal, Antiquity, and necessary
use of the Clergy, and the pre-
tended and real Occasions of
their *Present Contempt*.

Honor Sacerdotii, firmamentum potentiae.

L O N D O N:

Printed for W. TAYLOR, at the Ship
in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1709.

A

Model Piece

FOR THE

ELERGY

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE



Howe & Co. London.

LONDON.

Printed for W. & A. G. at the Sign
in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1793.

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THE
INTRODUCTION.

IF there were not in man a natural desire to convey something of himself to Posterity, and that his Memory might survive his Ashes; we had never heard of the *Egyptians* expending their Treasures in Pyramids, nor of the *Greeks* and *Romans* bestowing their Wealth and Care in Statues; Monuments and Inscriptions. And this desire is so naturaliz'd into all Qualities of men, that even the poor *Statuary* express'd no less, when he so cunningly placed his Name in the *Image* of his God, that it might last as long as that Master-piece of his Art. And yet men are not more ambitious of Memory than Fame; as is clearly to be seen in those very persons, who though never so careless of a virtuous Conversation, are yet marvellous greedy of that Reputation which is its natural appendage.

Nor can this be any matter of our Admiration, when it is duly considered, That

B

Reputation

The Introduction.

Reputation goes further than Power ; and that men are serviceable, or otherwise, according to the Opinion which is had of their Persons. “ For, let two men (said that Oracle of the Chair and Pulpit) “ speak the same words, give the same “ advice, pursue the same business, drive “ the same design, with equal right, equal means, equal diligence, and every “ other thing equal ; yet commonly the “ success is strangely different, if the one “ be well thought of, and the other labour of an ill report. So that he loseth the chief advantage of his Cause, “ who loseth the good Opinion of his Person.

And though a good Opinion of mens Persons be of great moment in all ranks of men, yet in none can it be of greater, than in the *Clergy*. For if we take our measures from the things wherein they deal, the Credit of their Persons is very highly considerable ; because thereon, in a great measure depend the success and belief of their Office, and consequently the welfare of Religion ; which with no small numbers of men, hath just so much Belief, as its Ministers have Credit. And yet we see no Order of men, upon every slight and frivolous occasion, so scornfully exposed as the *Clergy* ; and that not
 20 feldome

The Introduction.

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seldom too for doing those very things, which with equal Esteemers, ought to be the matter of their Commendation and Reverence. For let Clergy-men, with a zeal and impartiality becoming their Function, press the due exercise of Holiness and Vertue, and the forsaking those courses of vicious and ungodly Living, wherewith so many are debauched; let them (following the method of the Gospel) teach us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and our obligation to live soberly, righteously, and godly all the time of our being upon Earth; let Clergymen (I say) conscientiously pursue these and the like Instances of their Office, and men commonly deal with them, as the Greeks dealt with their two Gods, Hercules and Mercury, when they worshipp'd the one with reviling Speeches, and the other with casting Dirt and Stones at his Image.

Now, when with not a little resentment I seriously consider, that the Concept of the Clergy is not the Russian barbarish Humour only of the Rude and uncivilized, but even of many of those, who would be look'd upon as the Lights of Deportment, and the Reasonable and Philosophical Persons of the Age moved with this Consideration) I began

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gan to stagger in my good Opinion of the Clergy, and to suspect there might be sufficient matter for the Tempest, especially when I saw it raised against them by persons of too much seeming Genteelness and Philosophy, to pour Contempt upon any without all just Cause or Precedence.

And yet fearing to be seduced with popular Examples, and unwarily to imbibed a groundless prejudice against that Order of Men, for which I have ever retained so Singular a Reverence and Esteem, I thought it the most Christian and Manly method, not to take upon trust a thing of so great Importance; But by a plain and short research into the Circumstances of the Present Clergy, to try if any thing might be met with to justify that Obligation and Contempt which is heapt upon them. And for a more methodical procedure, I have cast my *Thoughts* into the ensuing Chapters.

CHAP. I.

Of the Name, and Original, &c. of the Clergy.

AS no Nation was ever yet read of, so infidel and profane, as to live without all belief of some Deity, and profession of some Religion; so there was never any Religion that had not Separate persons to whom was committed the Power and Care of prescribing, directing, and administering the Rites thereof, and whom by the Figure we may call their Clergy. For the Name coming of *Clerus* naturally signifying a Lot, Patrimony, or Heritage, may inoffensively be given both to the Jewish and Heathen Priests; who for their attendance upon Religion had their Subsistence and Employment.

But in the first times of Christianity the word *Clergy* was solemnly adopted into the Family of Religious Titles, and made to denote the Church, (or whole Body of Believers) which being God's peculiar inheritance, was called his *Clerus*, or Clergy. And this acception of the word is well approved of by some Modern

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Writers, that they with the Fathers had still continued it in its first Latitude, and that they had never appropriated that to the Ministry, as being but a part of the Communion, which primitively belonged to the whole. And yet Master Calvin who seems most offended at this restraint of the word, cannot deny its Antiquity; but confesses it to have been an ancient Mode of speaking, to call the whole Order of Ecclesiastical Ministers by the Name of Clergy.

But not to saunter away time in sounding of Puddles, it sufficeth our present purpose to take notice, That those Provinces among the Romans over which they set Procurators, Prætors and Proconsuls were styled *Cleri*. And that in allusion to this acception of the word, the Charge or Portion assigned by Lot to *Matthias*, whether, as most conceive, he was to preach the Gospel, was called *Κλήρος* *Διακονίας καὶ Ἀποστολῆς*, the Lot of Ministry and Apostleship. And the several places whither the Apostles went to plant the Gospel, were their *Κλήραι*, or Provinces; which after they had converted them to the Faith, they were to instruct and govern. But in this Government they were carefully to avoid the Exaction and Covetousness notorious in the Roman

Prætor

Prætors, who minded nothing but to gripe and squeeze wealth out of the people, therewith to enrich themselves; But on the contrary to take care of their Provinces, as Shepherds of their Flocks, using such moderation and clemency as might move the people to obey them, not of constraint, but with a *willing mind*. And in imitation of these Κληροι of the Apostles, some have conjectured that their Successors had Provinces allotted to their Government and Instruction; and that from the same *Cleri*, the persons who taught and ruled them, derived the appellation of *Clergy*. There is indeed a *Learned Writer*, who by no means can be induced to admit of these *Cleri* or Provinces, but with many probabilities has labour'd to refute them, in the Sixth Chapter of his *Irenicum*. But whether Κληρος Ἀποστολῆς doth signifie the *Office*, or *Province* of Apostleship, doth not at all concern our present purpose, seeing that either of the two is enough to occasion the Name we speak of.

But besides this *Roman* account of the word, we have another from the *Hebrews*; Among whom that which we render Κληροι, signified those Portions which fell by Lot to any in the division of an Estate or Country. Thus in the Division of *Ca-*

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naan, when the Patriarchs received their *Κλῆροι*, or portions in Land, God appointed none unto *Levi*, but made himself his Lot and Possession. And when the whole World was divided into *Hebrew* and *Pagan*, God chusing the former to profess his Worship, he made them his *Κλῆρος*, or people of his inheritance, *Deut.* 4. 20. And those of the *Jews* who believed the Gospel, are, according to *St. Peter's* intimation, God's Lot, of whom he took possession, as of a Patrimony assigned to his most holy Service. And after this also, such among the Believing *Jews* as were ordain'd for the Ministry, were by way of Eminence called the *Κλῆρος*, or Clergy of God. Because when they were admitted to Holy Orders, they were set apart and devoted to his *Solemn Worship*, and thereby became his more peculiar Portion. Like those whom God, in *Numb.* 16. separated from the Congregation, to bring them near to himself, to the service of the *Tabernacle of the Lord*, and to stand before the Congregation, to Minister unto them.

And any of these notices of the word which have been already mention'd, I take for a clearer occasion of its application to the Ministry, than that of *David's* distribution of the Priests into several Courses. Which hapned upon the death

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of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, when there remain'd no more Sons to *Aaron* but *Eleazar* and *Ithamar*, In whose two Families the succession of the Priests was preserved. At which time *David*, according to the number of people in each Family, made his Division. Now this Distribution being made Κλήρω , or by *Lot*, some have thought that all those have from thence been called *Clergy*, whose Office was to Minister in Holy Things.

But whatever was the occasion of the Title of *Clergy*, its first application to the Ecclesiastique Ministry was Significant and Laudable, not to say Sacred and Divine, and such as even Malice it self can make no Topick to traduce, or condemn those that bear it.

C H A P. II.

Of the Antiquity of the Clergy: A rational account of, and inquiry into the Institution, &c.

HAVING consider'd the native signification of the word, which according to *Epictetus* is *the beginning of knowledge*; the next thing by the proposed Method to be examined, is the Antiquity of the Clergy; which is so clear that it

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it may seem meer trifling to attempt its demonstration. For indeed the Antiquity of the Clergy is to be placed among those Verities, which are more manifest and known of themselves, than by all can be alledged for their Manifestation. And therefore whosoever shall deny a matter of such evidence and universal acknowledgment, as that now spoken of, he ought to be reckon'd for a meer Sceptick Wrangler, unworthy of confutation, and as an enemy to the common sentiments of all Mankind, and the impressions of Universal Nature and Religion, by whom the antiquity of the Clergy, or Priest-hood can be disbelieved, or denyed.

But yet when we seriously consider the unhappy *genius* of the Age wherein we live, and that it is our hard lot to fall into those *perillous times* wherein not only some inferiour Points, but the whole frame of Religion is ready to be brought in *question* and to be thought no more than a meer Engine of Government; we can scarce hope, upon this sad reflection, that the order and Institution of the Clergy should meet with any higher esteem. And, I hope, will not be deem'd meer Melancholy to imagine, That there is a race of men who will not be coy and squeamish to make

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the *Calling* of the Clergy, as well as the Belief of a God, to be wholly grounded upon some blind Tradition, set on foot by some crafty Politician ; who by the Doctrine of *Obedience* and *Submission*, daily inculcated by this *Order of Men*, might be the better able to awe a silly sheepish World ; and to render it more tractable to his purposes.

But such as are so far taken with this fine Conceit, as to think that the Institution of the Clergy is nothing but a blind Tradition invented by some cunning States-man, I would have them to answer me without doubling, who was the Author of this Tradition ? When did it commence ? How came these men to be so wise as to discover and know that which for so many years already past, none was able to find out ? What was there to guide and instruct the World before this blind Tradition ? Who set this Tradition first on foot ? and before it was set on foot, was there no Clergy, or were they unnecessary ? At what Period became the Clergy useful ? and why then and not before ? But when the cunning States-man invented this Tradition, by what means did he induce men to believe him ; and that too in a case which was clear contrary to their former judgment, and to the judgment of all the Generations

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nerations that ever went before them? Did he compel them to it by force, and gain the day by dint of Sword? then where is the Story of his Atchievements? what Monuments preserve the memory of his Battles and Victories? where and in what *Ara* did this *Mighty man* live, who did thus over-awe the World?

But if the Politician moved men by Reason to believe him, we must needs grant the Reasons to have been wonderfully clear and weighty, that could persuade the whole World to come off from their old Opinion, and so far to part with their Liberty, as to set over them an Order of Men, whom they knew from the design and renour of their Function, would fill their minds with fear and awe, and put a curb upon their carnal Wills, restrain their darling Lusts, bound their worldly Interests, obstruct the stream of their Natural Inclinations, and at once abridge them of all their wonted Licentiousness. But if the Politician did first move men to receive this Order of Men meerly upon the account of the reasonableness of the Institution, then is this ground enough both to acknowledge and respect the Function. But what did the States-man design in setting afoot such an Institution? Had he any regard therein unto the good

of

of the World? Did he convince Mankind that a Clergy was truly necessary to the Solemnity of Holy Rites, preservation of Religion, and to the promotion of the Peace and Welfare of Government among men? If so, then tell me, did he say the truth, or did he lye? If he said truth, then we ought to believe him, and consequently to assert the Clergy upon the account of Truth: If he told a lye, then is it for the good of the whole World to believe a lye. For if it be a lye to say, That the Institution of the Clergy is nothing else but a blind Tradition, set on foot by some crafty States-man, on purpose to awe the World by their Ministry, and to keep it Honest and Peaceable, Obedient and Submissive, then is a Lye the foundation of all these Felicities. Or if it be true to say thus, yet we are still to reverence the Clergy, because they are the Channel conveying so many benefits to the World, &c. But to proceed.

That the foundation of all Religion consists in the belief of a God, is so universal an Article, that even those Persons and Nations who differ most from one another, and that too in no ordinary points of Religion, do unanimously accord in this, That there is a God, whom we are bound to labour to please and honour,
and

and to fear to offend and provoke, out of a hope to be made happy by him. And as to those who have opposed the Belief of a God, they have been so very few, and commonly so vitious, to so vile a degree that the World hath been greatly weary of them, and thought them of so little Credit, that they could never persuade it, that they were in earnest; But that their wicked lives tempted them rather to wish that there were no God, than that any reason did convince them to believe so. And as the best and wisest of men have agreed in the *belief* of a God, and that that Belief is the foundation of all Religion; so they have likewise acknowledged, That Religion was to be expressed in the solemn worship of that God, whom they believed. And to the end that this Worship might be truly *Solemn*, they likewise held, That it was to be publickly celebrated in *appointed places, at set times, in prescript forms, and by select persons*. And we find this last circumstance so universally observed by all Nations moderately civilized, that it may seem to be founded in the Law of Nature, and to have had none other but God for its Author. Or, if this were otherwise, how should it come to pass that it is almost as easie to find a people without *Souls*, as without some sort of

f Religion; or to find any sort of Religion without reference to a God; or either Religion, or a God, without a Clergy or Separate Persons to Negotiate the *Holy Ceremonies*? And not to meddle at present with the *Divine Appointment* of *Certain Men* for the administration and defence of Religion; we will conceive upon what grounds men herein, left unto their own *reason*, might be induced to erect a Clergy, or to constitute an Order of men to appoint and perform the publick Solemnities of Religion, and to direct and determine in emergent Cases.

And we may imagine that the first move hereunto was a mature deliberation of the natural importance and design of Religion it self; which was clearly seen to bind men to a Solemn and Regular Worship of the Deity. Now this Worship (they saw) could neither be Regular nor Solemn, if there were not select persons to make it so; for things cease to be both, when they become Common; and they must needs become Common, when vulgarly mixt and transacted with profane, that is, Common Utensils. And what is not the least considerable, those things are in great likelihood not to be done at all, or with no just decorum, which are left arbitrary for any one to do. They consider'd likewise the manifold indispositions

dispositions usually accompanying the generality of Mankind, whereby they were render'd very incompetent to handle things Sacred, according to the dignity of their Nature, and intent of their Institution. They saw all, That Holy matters were to be kept within a *Sept*, the more decently to secure them from being unhallowed by the rude and undiscerning touch of the Vulgar. For the Holy Offices of Religion are at the same time profan'd that they are made Common; which they cannot escape, if there be no distinction of Persons observ'd in their Administration. Men in this affair might likewise argue from a Parity of Reason; and that it might be for the credit and advancement of all profitable *Arts* and *Professions* to be provided of such *Professors*, *Officers* and *Masters* as may propagate, instruct, and execute the same; then the like must be granted to Religion, or else we must think it to be of less worth and moment than Secular Professions, and that less is required to make a man Religious, than a *Plow* maker, and to give him a competent knowledge of the things of God, than the making of a *Horse-shoe*.

Nor doth it here amount to any valuable Objection, that the common right and interest, which every one hath in Religion

on, is sufficient to entitle them to the publick officiating the Solemn Rites thereof; for by the same reason every one might gird on the Sword of Justice, and become a Publick Minister of the Laws, on pretence of the Common Interest which he hath therein; the consequences of which *Hypothesis* are so absurd and monstrous, that they carry with them their own confutation.

But that which we may presume to have been most moving in this concern, was the Consideration of the Common Nature of Mankind; which being far on in corruptions, is utterly unfit for, and unprovided of that Sanctity which is required in Religious Addresses: upon which consideration it was deem'd not on- safe and agreeable, but also necessary for this fallen condition of men, that out of themselves some persons should be chosen, and by Holy Ceremonies set apart, and as were placed in a middle Station between God and the People, on purpose to present God with the Peoples Petitions, and to bring down his Blessings upon them. And though the bestowing of God's Blessings depends upon his own free will, and that the acceptance of such Petitions as are made by such Persons in be-
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half of the people, is to be known by such Testimonies as God is pleased to vouchsafe; yet that there is a necessity of such persons, who by *Holy Offices* are thus to *mediate* for the people, is a thing God himself was pleased to illustrate by an everlasting Example, when he sent his Son to take our Nature, that he might be qualified to intercede for that Nature which he had taken, and be fit to make nearer accesses unto that Seat of Mercy, which we by reason of our great imperfections, were unfit to approach. And in this sense he is styled, the *only* Mediator between God and Man.

And I humbly conceive it was with respect unto this Consideration, that in the designing of Persons for the Clergy the Greek Church made this Prayer *Κύριε ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν*, &c. “ O Lord our God, who because Man’s Nature is not able of it self to approach the Glorious Essence of thy Godhead, hast in thy wise Providence and Dispensation ordered us Masters and Teachers of the *Passions with our selves*; whom thou hast placed in thy Throne (or in the Ministry of thy Kingdom, the Gospel) *εἰς τὸ ἀναφέρειν σοι Θυσίαν*, &c. to offer unto thee a Sacrifice in behalf of the people, &c. The contexture and occasion of which Solemn prayer I take for no competent

competent account of appointing men for the Clergy.

But not to enquire too minutely for the Reasons that at first might probably induce Mankind to constitute peculiar persons for the Service of Religion, we may conceive that all herein did not follow the same *Light*. But that some Nations were hereunto persuaded by the more durable and regular principle of Reason: Others, by an Universal Tradition, which will last as long as either we reverence our Ancestors, or think not our selves wiser than all that lived before us. Others no doubt, imitated herein some Nation, which they esteemed wise, sober, and disinterested. But without any peremptory determination of the Motive, we are most certain of the thing, and that ever since the Creation a *Deity, Religion, and Priesthood*, do as mutually infer each other, as the most *natural Relations*.

C H A P. III.

Of what Rank and Condition the Clergy were elected, among the Jews and Pagans: The Respect shewn them, &c.

HAVING thus briefly surmised some of the more probable inducements for

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the Institution of a Clergy ; we come next to examine what manner of persons were usually made choice of for that Office ; and what respect was given them, when they were once therewith invested. And limiting this Remark to the Times antecedent to our Saviour's *coming in the flesh*, we know that all Religion was then either of *Jew* or *Gentile*. And beginning with the *Gentiles*, we read how the Sons of their Princes were educated for the *Priesthood*: That their Kings did exercise this Office: That in their Sacrifices there was among the *Romans* a peculiar Office assigned unto the King. And we find that when *Numa*, to give more Splendour and Credit to Religion, established many sorts of *Priests* in the *City*, fearing that in process of time the Kings might come to neglect their Office about the Sacrifices, by reason of the weighty affairs of State, that might otherwise imploy them ; he ordain'd the *Flamines* to supply the King's place, who bore the names of the several Gods, to whom they were consecrate. And this officiating of their Kings was thought so necessary, that when they were banish't *Rome*, one of the *Priestly* Order had the *Name* of King while he was doing his Function, lest the People should suspect any thing to be lacking in the worship of the Gods. Thus

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they preserved Royalty in Religion, when it was cast out of the State; and how unwelcome soever it became among the uncertain people, yet they thought it necessary to be preserved in the Priesthood, which was generally so highly valued by the *Romans*, that it was accounted a singular honour in their Genealogies, that some of their Family had been *Priests*. And of this Truth we meet with a pregnant instance in *Agrippa*, who writing to *Caius Caesar*, and speaking of the Honour of his own Descent, he told the Emperor, that some of his Ancestors had not only been Kings, but also admitted to the Priesthood. We find likewise that a sort of Priests among the *Romans*, called *Augurs*, were chosen out of the *Patricii*, who were the Nobility of *Rome*.

But suppose the Families out of which the *Gentile Clergy* were elected, had been as mean as they were certainly otherwise, yet to those who were once received unto that Province, they were careful to pay an esteem and reverence suitable to the sacredness of their imployment; and to invest them with such Immunities as testified they thought them not fit to be treated as the *Vulgus*. Rationally concluding, that those whom they made choice of for the

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Service of Religion, were to be raised above the common condition of Men, and to be freed from the Cares and Incumbrances of the World. And it will not be here greatly impertinent to observe, that the *white Vestments* of the Heathen Priests attested their Separation from the *Vility* of the *Many*: And, and that their mitres, and Bonnets and other Ensigns of their Office, were also known Symbols of Authority and Honour. And yet in further testimony of the respect the Gentiles bore their Priests, there was none, no not in time of War, that durst offer them the least violence or abuse. Insomuch that it was gon into a *proverbial phrase* for a barbarous and unnatural War, that it spared not the Priests, but violated those very *persons* that carried the Holy Fire before the Army. *Tacitus* somewhere speaking of the Priests, tells us *that* "they were not molested with the
"Scorns of vitious and ill-bred persons, but
"by certain Canons and Laws were se
"cured from all *outrage* and *disrespect*."

And if any thing be yet needful for a further illustration of the Gentiles carriage in this matter, it is summ'd up by *Cicero* in the Case of the Roman *Augurs*: "The right of the *Augurs*, said
"he, joyn'd with Authority, is the most
excellent

“ excellent it the Commonwealth. And
“ this I say, not because I my self am an
“ *Augur*, but because it is just and neces-
“ sary so to speak. For if we enquire for
“ their Authority, *what* can be greater
“ than to convene and dissolve the pub-
“ lick Assemblies, and appoint the So-
“ lemnities of Religion ! *What* more
“ magnificent than to have power to de-
“ cree when the Consuls are fit or unfit
“ to hold the Magistracy ! *What* can be
“ more religious than to give Institutes
“ to the people ! And yet *Cicero* expres-
ly affirms all these things to have been
in the power of the *Augurs*, *Lib. 2. de*
Legib.

Nor are we to look upon the *Romans*
to have affected Singularity in this parti-
cular ; for we find the *Persians*, *Egyptians*,
and the great *Lights* of the Gentile World,
the *Athenians*, to have equall'd, or rather
surpass'd the *Romans*, in the veneration
of their Priests, whom they made the
Guides and Counsellors of their *Kings*,
and *Judges* and Dividers in Secular Af-
fairs. It were easie to be numerous in
Examples to this purpose, and by an In-
duction of all the Nations in the World
to prove this Reverence of the *Clergy*,
whom we read in many Nations to have
lived apart from other men, and to have

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had their *Adyta*, or *Secret Places*, as well as their Gods; the solitary Groves where they abode, signaling the *separateness* of their Function.

But if all this should be charged upon the Ignorance and Superstition of the Heathen World, and therefore no more fit to be imitated than their *Polytheism* and *Idolatry*; It will then import us in the next place to consider, what in this case was the practice of the *Jews*, God's own People, whom we cannot suspect of Ignorance of Imposture, being herein plainly guided and instructed of God. And first it is observable that among the *Jews*, the designation of persons for the Guidance of Religion, was much more ancient than a Levitical Institution, being practised by them from the Beginning. For they had Priests before *Aaron*, *Exod. xix. 22.* And when Families made Churches as well as Kingdoms, to be a Priest of the Most High God, or to officiate the Matters of Religion was the *Hereditary Honour*, and *Peculiar Prerogative* of the First-born, or Chief of the Family. For the selling of which Privilege *Esau* purchased the odious Title of *Profane*. And when the *Jews* were blessed with a settled Priesthood, they paid it all imaginable respect; beginning and determining all their publick Transactions

Transactions at the Word and *Decree* of their *Priests*, making the Honour of that *Office*, the Strength of their Arms, calling it a *Celestial Dignity*, a *Heavenly* and no *Earthly Inheritance*. And the Testimonies of what I now speak, are so many and known, that both the number and plainness will excuse the prosecution.

Nor were the ancient *Jews* more careful in their respect, than in the choice of their *Priests*; for we read in the *Sacred Story* of one of their *Kings*, that it was reckon'd in him for a great sin, that he made *Priests* of the lowest of the people, which were not of the Sons of *Levi*. He consecrated whosoever had a mind, without bearing any respect either to *Probity* of *Manners*, or *Honesty* of *Descent*; and that passing by the Line of *Levi*, he took those who had neither *Right* nor *Title* to the *Priesthood*. And what was yet more wicked, some are of opinion that he was guilty of what the *Canon Law* now calls *Simony*, by selling the *Offices* of the *Priest* to those, who would give most for them.

And having thus briefly intimated the practice of both the ancient *Jews* and *Gentiles*, in relation to their *Choice* and *Reverence* of their *Clergy*; If we should now draw down the *Enquiry* to the modern

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dern and present State of the World; we shall find no Nation so savage and uncivilized, as not to have some Officers of Religion, whom they treat with Civility, and make considerable in the Interest of their State and Government. The present *Jews* and *Mahumetans* would furnish us with *Store* of Matter to this purpose, if it were not already (*in two late Treatises concerning them*) done to our hands.

Now, what has been said will enforce us to one of these Conclusions; Either that the Rites of Christian Religion are more cheap, ordinary and common than those of the *Jews* and *Pagans*; Or those *Separate Persons* appointed to celebrate those *Rites* must have our Esteem and Reverence. To say that Christian Religion is not the most Divine Mystery that ever came into the World, and that all the parts thereof are in themselves the most excellent and sublime, and to Men the most beneficial and agreeable, that ever were made known upon Earth, *is as false as its greatest Adversary, the Father of Lyes.* And not to render due regard unto those who are known to be the true Ministers of Christian Religion, is either to think them less worthy than the Pagans thought the Ministers of their idolatrous Ceremonies;

or

or to shew our selves less Civil, than the greatest Barbarians.

C H A P. IV.

A brief account of the Institution of the Levitical Clergy.

THere is nothing more material in the Circumstances of Religion, than that men should be ascertain'd that their Spiritual Guides have their Commission and Calling from God; because a doubting thereof must unavoidably prove no small prejudice to their Authority and Success. And upon this Consideration it will be necessary to enquire into the first Institution of the Clergy, to the end that if we find it to be no less Divine, than we have found it to be Rational, the Sacred Honour of its Original might be sufficient to justify and assert it against all contempt.

And looking back to the first Dispensations of Religion, we find the Priesthood to have been ambulatory, and the Holy Offices consign'd to the First-born, or Chief of each Family. For the Priesthood did

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did not begin in *Aaron*, but was translated and conferr'd upon his Family before his Consecration. For those young men of the Children of *Israel*, which offered Burnt-offerings, and sacrificed Peace-offerings of Oxen unto the Lord (*Exod. 24. 5.*) as they were Priests, so without question they were no other than the *First-born* to whom the Priesthood did belong. But as soon as God began to constitute a *Church*, he began also to fix the *Priesthood*, and appointed *Aaron* to minister the Publick Services. And during the Levitical Dispensation the Succession of the Priesthood was continued in *Aaron's* Posterity, and the High-Priesthood tied to the Line of his First-born, the rest of his Posterity being simply termed Priests, or Priests of the *Second Order*.

Now, what is here chiefly to be taken notice of, is *Aaron's Call* to the *Priesthood*, which we are assured was from God. So that neither *Aaron* did at first, nor any after him could legally, take this Honour to himself: But all were called of God. And this Truth we find miraculously attested in the suddain and fearful destruction of those who undervalued the Priests, and factiously usurp'd their Office. 'Tis true *Aaron's Priesthood* was but temporary,

rary, and at the appointed Season to expire and determine ; yet as long as it did continue, it was lawful for none but those of his *Line* to undertake it ; Because God had so ordain'd. And this Divine Ordinance of the Priesthood was such an inviolable observation, that even Christ, when he came to give himself an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling Savour, and by the Oblation of his own Body made an Atonement for our Sins ; when Christ, I say, became an Aaronical Priest, and put an end to that sort of Priesthood ; when he also became a Priest according to the Order of *Melchizedeck*, which lasts for ever ; both were by Divine Appointment, as the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* distinctly argues out of the *Second*, and the *Hundred and Tenth Psalms*. But here it is worthy our remark, that Jesus was anointed with the Unction of *Aaron* to the *Sacerdotal Office*, though not called after the Order of *Aaron* ; for it is evident that our Lord sprang out of *Judah*, of which Tribe Moses spake nothing concerning Priesthood, (*Heb. 7. 14.*) or, that no Priest should come of that Tribe. But Jesus was made a Priest after a more ancient Order, according to the Prediction of the *Psalmist*, *The Lord hath sworn*
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and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchizedeck. But though he were of another Order, yet whatsoever *Aaron* did as a Priest, was wholly Typical, and to be fulfilled in the *Messias*, as he was a Priest. To which he hath a double Title, the one of Primogeniture, as the First begotten of God; the other of Unction, as being anointed unto that Office.

Now, if Christ did not glorifie himself to become an High-Priest; if as Man, he did not advance himself to that Dignity, but was thereunto advanced by God; then is the *Priesthood* an Office to whose undertaking, more is required than personal Abilities, and which none of *right* can undertake, but either by God's immediate or mediate Call. For though the meetness of the Person ought to be looked upon by Men, yet we cannot prescribe unto God, or tell him who are fit to be heard by him in behalf of the People, or whom he ought to entertain in Religious Addresses. Nor are we able to yield a reason from the nature of the thing, why God should accept of *Aaron* more than of *Abiram*, or the *Mediation* of any one man for many, except the free pleasure of him that makes the choice. But to return: If the more solemn Institution of the Clergy
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bear date only from the Consecration of *Aaron*, yet it plainly appears to be Divine, or of God's own appointment; and during the time of the Mosaical Oeconomy, was so Sacred and Inviolable, that none could invade it under a gentler Penance than *Sudden death*, or a *Leprosie*. And long before this too, I mean before the erecting of the Tabernacle or Temple, and Institution of Priesthood, when God was served within Private Walls, and the Right of Priest-hood in every Family was annexed to the Primogeniture, so that the First-born was *Priest*; we read *but of one*, contrary to custom, who aspired unto it, whose Ambition therein would have been utterly inexcusable, if the whole disposal of the matter had not been from God, who loved *Jacob*, but hated *Esau*, and made the Elder to serve the Younger, *Rom. 9. 12, 13.* But though the Levitical or Aaronical Priesthood was of Divine Institution, yet being wholly Typical, and consequently to determine, and because it is already past and gon; we are next to enquire into the Nature and Constitution of that Clergy which succeeded it.

C H A P. V.

Of the Institution of the Evangelical Clergy.

WHen the Great Fulfiller of the Law, (even the blessed Author of our most Holy Faith) in a most excellent manner made good that Title ; and being drawing to the last Stage of his life, and together with it to put a full end to the *Mosaick Dispensation*, and abolish both the Sacrifice and Priesthood in that of himself : When (without a Figure) the immutable Clergy of the *Gospel* was to succeed into the mutable Clergy of the *Law* ; he called those Apostles, of whom at first he made choice, and gave them *Power* to erect and constitute a *Church*, and to transmit such Powers unto others as were proper for the continuance and propagation of the same. Now, the Commission which Christ gave to the Apostles to empower them to this end, is the chief thing to be considered ; and we meet with it at large, as it was signed by our Saviour immediately upon his Ascension, in *S. Matth. 28.*

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18. *All power is given unto me in Heaven and Earth.*

19. *Go ye therefore and teach (or, make) all Nations (Disciples,) baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

20. *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, am with you alway, even unto the end of the World.*

In which words Christ first asserts and declares his own Commission; shewing his Apostles that what he did, was not the result of his own private Judgment, but the exercise of that Authority which was given him of his Father; who had consign'd unto him a full Power of ordering and disposing whatsoever belong'd to the Church, of which he was made the Prince and Head upon his rising from the dead; and by vertue of that relation stood obliged to provide for the preservation and encrease thereof. But how this should be done, is the doubt to be satisfied. For Christ in his own Person could not make this provision for the Church, *because as to his humane Nature, he was shortly to remove to Heaven, and there abide until his coming to judge the* *living and dead.* Now whatever a man

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cannot do in his own person, must be done by deputation, if it be done at all. And therefore Christ by his Ascension being become incapable in his own Person to take this care of the Church, he deputed his Apostles *missioners* thereunto, appointing them in his Name and Stead to perform all those Offices, which were required to the Establishing and Advancement of the Gospel. Giving them also power to depute others to succeed them in the same Care, and to deliver down the same Power, successively to the end of the World. And to the end that the Clergy might not be thought to expire in the Persons of the Apostles, nor they to have died without Successors in the Ministry, Christ promised upon his *Departure*, to be with them unto the End of the World. Which words we will take for granted to have been spoken to the Apostles as, they were the cheifs of the Clergy, or Ministers of the Gospel; next under Christ and that they were not limited exclusively to their Persons, but in them did belong their successors of the Apostolick Order. For however the Apostles might be with Christ, he could not be personally with them, so much as unto their death, much less unto the end of the World, being so shortly upon the

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speech of these words, to ascend up into Heaven; whereof they themselves were *Undeniable Witnesses*.

It is likewise duly to be considered: That Christ by his promise [*lo, I am with you alway, even unto the End of the World*] intended some benefits to the Church, which should be of no less continuance than the Church it self, and that the Apostles were to be the first and their Dispensers of those benefits. And if it be demanded what these benefits were? it may (from the Text) be safely replied, that they were the several Functions of the Clergy, to which the Apostles were Commission'd; *viz.* Preaching, baptising, Administration of the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, the exercise of the Censures, &c. All which were to end with the Apostles, or they were not: If they were to end with the Apostles, then has the Church ever since the death of the Apostles been without these Offices, which amounts to no less than that there has been no Church since their Decease. Or, if they were not to end with the Apostles, but have always been, and are still to be exercised, unto the end of the World; then it cannot be denied but there ever have been, and ever must be fit Persons, who like

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the Apostles must have a just power to dispense these Benefits, or exercise these Offices. For no less can be conceived to have been intended by Christ in his promise of being with the Apostles *alway, Even unto the End of the World.* And we shall have no temptation to suspect this Interpretation of the *Promise*, when we shall consider, first, that by the *End of the World*, “That State of affairs is to be understood, which began exactly at Christ’s Resurrection; when all Power was given him in Heaven and Earth; which was to continue to the end of the World, or his coming to Judgment. Next, that the promise made unto the Apostles had respect unto this *State*; and therefore the Benefits promised, namely, *Preaching, Baptising, &c.* were to endure unto the full determination of the same.

Thirdly, That seeing Christ could not possibly be with the Apostles personally, nor they upon Earth, *Unto the End of the World*: There must be some other way to verifie Christ’s presence with the Apostles, and their being in the World unto the End thereof; both which seem to be implied in the Text. As to Christ’s presence with the Apostles, it is unanimously concluded of the *Visaria presentia*
Spiritualia

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Spiritus, in *Tertullian's* phrase, or of making the Holy Ghost his *Vicar*, in sending him to be with the Apostles upon his Ascension into Heaven. Which mission of the *Spirit* cannot be meant only of that which hapned at *Pentecost*, when he sat upon them in bodily Appearance, and inspired them with such extraordinary Gifts as were needful for those first times of the Gospel; such as the Gift of Tongues to enable them to Preach to all Nations in their own Language, and of others Miracles, to confirm the truth of their Doctrine, and to move men to believe it. For if the promise of Christ's being alway with the Apostles, were to be understood only of this Mission of the Spirit upon them, then it would follow, that Christ were still to be thus present with the Church, and that extraordinary Gifts did still continue, or that he who promised, were not faithful. And therefore it is necessary that we understand Christ's being with the Apostles, of his giving them the Holy Ghost to instate them with Power, not only in their own Persons to plant and govern the Church, and to perform all the Offices of the Clergy relating thereunto; but also to ordain others unto the same Functions, and to give them Authority to do the like *Unto the End of the World.*

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So that by this promise made of his presence with the Apostles, Christ provided for a successive Clergy, in whom the Apostles were to continue, or the Ordinary Ministry be preserved unto the Consummation of all things.

And we have no reason to be jealous of this sense of our Saviour's Words, when we find it universally agreed upon, that one great end of sending the Holy Ghost to the Church, was the sanctifying and setting apart of Persons for the *Work* of the Clergy, and to convey a standing Authority of Ordination of meet persons to *mediate between God and the People*; to pray for and bless them in the Name of Christ; to help their Infirmities by composing for them a *Liturgy* according to the Pattern of the Apostles, of whose *Liturgy* several passages do yet remain. And the Holy Ghost doth still impower the Church to Ordain and Consecrate Persons for the Ministerial Office, for the Edifying of the Body of Christ. Who when ordain'd, are bound to take heed to themselves and unto all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made them *Overseers*, to feed the Church of God.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

*Of the Spirit's Agency in respect of the
Clergy, &c.*

HAVING endeavour'd to demonstrate that the true sense of Christ's promises, *In being with the Apostles*, doth respect that Authority which the Holy Ghost gave them, for appointing a settled Ministry in the Church, while militant upon Earth; In subserviency to our present purpose it may not be unuseful to observe, That among all those Offices which the Holy Ghost performs for the Church, there is none wherein he seems to be more interess'd, or to have a greater agency, than in the qualifying and separation of Persons for the Priesthood. Which work indeed is so peculiar to the Spirit, and so necessary for this purpose, that even the Great Pastor and Bishop of Souls became not a Preacher of his own Gospel, till he was thereunto Anointed and Consecrated by the Holy Ghost, *Luke 4. 18*. And when the same Great Bishop Ordain'd his Apostles, to be Bishops under him it was according to the tenor of his own Ordination, *As*

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my Father sent me, so send I you ; and to shew wherein the Similitude consisted, he breathed on them, and said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost,* John 20. 21, 22. Which clearly implies, that as at his *Mission* from his Father to his Office, he was Anointed, or Consecrated by the Holy Ghost, which visibly descended upon him at his Baptism, when he entred upon his Ministry : So when the Apostles had their *Mission* from Christ, and were to enter upon their Ministry, they also were Consecrated by the Holy Ghost. Which they received not on'y to gift, and inable their *Persons*, but also to empower them for their *Office* ; as is undeniably evident upon the account of the words immediately following [*Receive ye the Holy Ghost*] which actually instate upon them the Power of the Keys.

'Tis true, after they had thus received the Holy Ghost, and were Commission'd to all the Offices of the Clergy, the Apostles were not immediately to fall upon their Execution, but were bid to stay at *Hierusalem*, till they should receive such Miraculous Gifts, by the visible descent of the Spirit, as should render their entrance upon the Ministry more solemn and remarkable, and their performance thereof

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thereof more efficacious and convincing:
That men seeing the *Wonders* done by
the Apostles, none might have the least
occasion to doubt of the truth of their
Doctrin, or their Authority to Preach
it.

But not only in Christ's Authorizing
the Apostles for the Clergy, but also in
their Authorizing others, and so forward,
the work is still ascribed to the Holy Ghost.
As to the Apostles the matter is evident in
the Case of *Barnabas* and *Saul*, whose se-
paration of them to the Ministry, is attribu-
ted to the Spirit. And we find the same
verified of the Presbyters of the Churches
of *Asia*, and in *Timothy* the Bishop of
Ephesus; Of whom it is said expressly, *The
Holy Ghost made them Overseers, Act. 20.*
28. Which (according to some) may
signifie two things. First, their Ordina-
tion to the Ministerial Office, attributed
to the Holy Ghost, as to the Original, by
by whose descent upon the Apostles, they
were Authorized to Communicate this
Authority, to give Commissions to others,
who were to succeed them in the Dignity
and Office of instructing and governing
the Church. Secondly, it may signifie
the Act of Designation, Election, Nomi-
nation to the Ministry, which at that
time was done by the *Special Revelation of
God,*

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God, and might properly be attributed to the Holy Ghost. And after this latter manner *Matthias* was chosen to succeed *Judas* in his Office; and *Saul* and *Barnabas* for the work, *Act. 1. 24. Act. 13. 2.* And if we have recourse herein to Church Story, we shall find how that the *Apostles* Ordain'd none of their *Converts* till they were *Tried* and *Approved* by the Holy Ghost. And that when *St. John* was return'd into *Asia*, he ordain'd every where such as were signified by the Spirit. And we are generally told by the Greek Fathers, that the primitive Bishops did not make *Clergy* of their own Heads, but by the Order and Command of the Spirit. Which being understood according to the distinction now mention'd, leaves no place of doubting of the manner or reality of the Spirit's concernment in ordaining men for the Clergy in that propheticall state of the Church, especially when it is considered, that all the sorts and degrees of Primitive Ecclesiasticks, are ascribed to the Appointment of the Holy Ghost, *Eph. 4. 11.*

And we have no ground of surmising that the Holy Ghost hath quitted his Interest in this great Concern; but rather to believe that he doth still preside at Holy and Regular Ordinations. Which are that Ecclesiastick Generation, where-
by

by the Clergy is propagated, the Apostles still survive in their Successors, and Christ is still present with *them*. And we have no reason at all to doubt but that the Spirit doth as *Truly*, though not so *Visibly*, assist at the present *Ordering* of Ministers, as he did at the separation of *Barnabas* and *Saul*; and that Christ is as really present by the same Spirit, as when he breathed *Him* upon the Apostles, and thereby gave them Authority for the Work of the Ministry

And to this purpose we are to understand our own Church, when she bids the Persons to be *Ordain'd* and *Consecrated*, Receive the Holy Ghost for the Office and Work of a Priest in the Church of God, now committed to thee, by the imposition of our hands, &c. And, Receive the Holy Ghost, for the Office and Work of a Bishop in the Church, now committed to thee, by the imposition of our hands, &c. The Holy Ghost in both forms is, I doubt not, to be taken in the same sense, and imports no more, but the conferring of Authority for the Execution of the Offices there Specified. Which Authority being convey'd by that we call *Orders* and *Consecration*, is fitly expressed by the same words, which were used by our Saviour in bestowing the same

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same power upon the Apostles at his sending of them forth to Preach the Gospel, and gather and constitute a Church.

I have not as yet met with any thing considerable relating to the *Forms* of Ordination used in the Ancient Church, but I suppose they were all agreeable to that our Saviour used at the Ordination of the Apostles. But the Form of Ordination being only of Ecclesiastical Institution, the Churches might inoffensively vary therein. In the Greek Church the Form was to this effect: "*The Divine Grace, which always heals our Infirmities, and supplies our wants, doth create or promote N. the Venerable Deacon to be a Presbyter, the Presbyter most beloved of God to be a Bishop.*" In the Western Church they use another Form, wherein they confer upon the Presbyter the power of Consecrating the *Elements* in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, and of Binding and Loosing. Our own Church hath a Form peculiar to her self, yet much resembling the old Greek Form, mention'd by *St. Clement.* in his *Constitutions*, *Lib. 8. c. 16.* Wherein the power of *Preaching* also is confer'd upon the Presbyter. And though I am not able at present to give a full account of all the Ancient Forms of Ordination,

dination, yet it sufficeth our purpose, that none was every yet met with, wherein the Original and supreme Power of Ordaining is not attributed to the Holy Ghost.

C H A P. VII.

Of the incommunicableness of the Offices of the Clergy.

THough what has been said renders *the Holy Ghost's Interest and Agency in the Separation of men to the Calling of the Clergy*, to be undeniable, yet there are still some who think the Ministry to be a thing of *Labour* rather than *Honor*, and to which, *Abilities without Authority, are sufficient*; by which Position the Concern of the *Spirit* must be wholly evacuated, as to yielding any orderly Power and certain Method of attaining unto the *Sacerdotal Office*. And though the *Socinian* and *Enthusiast* are the more known, and profess'd Assertors of this *Conceit*; yet it is much to be feared that all Contemners of the Clergy are sower'd with the same Leaven. For if they were
thoroughly

thoroughly persuaded of the Divine Right of the Clergy, and that none can take that Honour unto himself, unless he be called of God, or by God's appointment; this one thing might be Charm enough both against *Contempt* and *Usurpation* of the same. And men would scarce be so hardy as to invade or *blaspheme* this *Calling*, when they saw it would involve them in the guilt of Sacrilege and Irreligion. But unto those who would lay that Holy Function Common, which God has placed within a *Sept*, and leave the Priesthood open to all that will enter it, without further Ceremony, than getting up and Ride; to the sober Consideration of such men, I would humbly recommend the ensuing particulars, to the end they may return to a better mind.

And first let them duly consider, how that St. Paul setting down the Nature of the Church, has styled it *the Body of Christ*. Where he means not a Similar Body, such as Fire, Air and Water, where, all the parts are alike and perform the same Office; but a Body consisting of diversity of Organs for several Faculties and Operations; such a Body as is not one Member but many, knit together with Unity and Charity, as with a Band of Health.

Health, As St. *Aug. Lib. 1. Cap. 16. De Doctr. Christian.* The whole fourteenth Chap. of 2 *Cor.* is inspired to this purpose, and designed to manifest, that in the Church of Christ, it is as monstrous and impossible for all to be Clergy-men, or Teachers and Governors, as for the Body of a man to be all *Tongue*, and *Eye*. And that it is as preposterous and destructive for all promiscuously to thrust themselves into the Ministry, as for the Members of a Man's Body to desert their Natural Situation, and all to press into the same place. The same Apostle has likewise term'd the Church a Building, *Eph. 2. 21.* wherein the Stones have their several and separate places, all being employed neither in the Foundation, nor the Corner; which Similitude relating to the *Congregation of Believers*, implies they were not all to bear the same Office. 'Tis true, that Christians in general are styled a Royal Priesthood, and a peculiar People, and a chosen Generation, 1 *Pet. 2. 5, 9.* Yet it is also true, that this was affirm'd of the Hebrew Nation (*Ex. 19. 6.*) at the same time when God had among them his *Levites*, Priests and High-priests: And therefore can be now no more of privilege; and therefore no more

more Argument, to make all Christians properly Priests, than it did the *Jews*; among whom the usurpation of the Priesthood was Signally punished with most *Severe strokes*. the words of St. *Peter* are a clear insinuation of the excellent Privileges procured by our Conversion to Christianity; and that like the Priests under the Law, who spent all their time in Sacrificing, and Religious Offices; so we should be constant in the service of God in the publick Assemblies; which he requires of us, as he did the Sacrifices of the Levitical Priests. And in respect of that freedom which true Believers have obtain'd from Sin and Satan, and that liberty wherewith they are invested by Christ; as also in regard of that daily service they are to pay him, they are said to be Kings and Priests unto God, *Rev. i. 6*. So that from these Texts, such as would intitle all to the Sacerdotal, may also instate them with the Regal Office.

But without a Figure; The choice of Persons for the Clergy, and the incom-munity of that Function, is such an express Doctrin of the *Scripture*, that it may seem no less superfluous to prove than it is Sacrilegious to gainsay it. And if we duly weigh the words of the first Commission,

Commission, as they occur, *Mat.* 28. they supersede all further confirmation of what we now speak. For they so plainly fix the Ministerial Offices, and make them such, appropriate and Authoritative Acts, as that none but the duly order'd can be blameless, and undertake them.

But besides all this, if according to some mens Fancies, Abilities be all that is requisite to make a Clergy-man; then it is but prudent and reasonable to make due enquiry into those Abilities, and to be duly inform'd of their Nature and Reality. Now, what Abilities soever any man can pretend unto, must either be *Infused*, or *Acquired*. If men assume unto themselves the Priests Office, meerly upon the pretence of *Infused Abilities*, or *Extraordinary Gifts*; then it is just to put them upon the proving such pretences by that sort of Testimony which was ever required in such a case: And to make them shew their Extraordinary Gifts, by Extraordinary Works: For if these pretenders are to be credited upon their own bare word, how easily will it then be for every bold, facing, confident fellow, to rub his Forehead, to pretend Extraordinary Gifts and Abilities, and to cozen the World, bely the *Holy Ghost*,

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(from whom all such real Gifts do come) and consequently to destroy all Order in the Church.

But if these Abilities are acquired, be they never so excellent, yet they must undergo Tryal and Examination, lest they should be but fanciful and presumptuous; and when found in the greatest perfection whereof they are capable, yet they can of themselves no more make a Clergy-man, than a Judge of Assizes, or any Secular Magistrate; which is a Power confer'd upon Abilities.

The next thing which ought herein soberly to be considered, is the Charge undertaken by the Clergy; which all acknowledge to be no less than the Care of Souls. For we cannot suppose the great Shepherd of the Sheep, who loved them so well as to lay down his life for them, would after his departure, leave them to wander up and down, without any guide or feed them. But that upon his own Decease he committed them to his chosen Clergy, at whose hands he at last will exact an account of their Souls. And in this his Care we find instanced in the strict Command he laid upon Peter to feed his Sheep and Lambs. Which the Apostle faithfully executed himself, and exhorted

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hath the free disposal of all mens Estates,
 hath given an Assignment to those that
 Preach the Gospel, of so much out of
 their Auditors Substance, as may de-
 cently maintain them. And therefore
 according to the Apostle's arguing, we
 must deal worse with the Clergy, than
 with our Oxen, Plow-men, and Thresh-
 ers, and violate the Laws of God, Na-
 ture and Reason, if we deny them a
 Right to be maintain'd by the Ministry,
 to whom we grant a Right to discharge it.
 And that double honor allotted to the
 Elders who labour well in the Word
 and Doctrin, is understood by some,
 Respect and Maintenance, and by all
 of an ample allowance, 1 Tim. 5. 17.
 And this is an Argument which will
 make men at least so provident, as not
 to admit more to be Preachers, than
 they are willing and able to maintain.
 And we must own it for a singular piece
 of bounteous Wisdom in the Almighty
 to settle a subsistence for the Clergy,
 that without the Interruption of Wor-
 ly Cares they might attend to Reading
 Exhortation, and Doctrin. And when God
 left out Levi in the Division of the Land,
 it was highly to his advantage, for
 instead of a Twelfth part God appointed

him a Tenth, and that too upon such terms, as made his Portion much more considerable than any of his Brethrens: And by this allowance the Priests were not only freed from the distracting troubles of the World, but also enabled to the obliging Offices of *Charity* and Almsdeeds; and not only apt to teach, but also given to Hospitality. Which are still loudly called for at the hands of the Clergy, even by those who grudge them those Revenues, without which they will be able to do neither. But I leave this, to return to our men of great Abilities; whom I heartily request, to imploy their parts in helping the weaker Brethren, by the Methods of Peace, Submission, and Charity. But if nothing will serve them but the Offices of the Priesthood; and that either through *Envious Faction*, or *mistaken Zeal*, they will be fingering the Hallowed Censor, and the *Holy Fire*, I then leave them to the Consideration of their Ancestors, *Corah* and *Uzziah*, for Instruction or Affrightment.

In the last place, I would gladly have those who would have all without distinction to perform the Offices of the Clergy, to consider the many inconveniencies which will unavoidably besall

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both Church and State, Religious and Civil Government from such an *Enormous* Principle.

First, As to the Church and Religion, the liberty of letting men, presumptuous of their Abilities, take upon them to become *Teachers*, will prove the ready way to make even Preaching it self, which some account the *All of Religion*, to become weak and contemptible; by being exposed to all the incongruities, follies, dotages, and impostures of the *Ignorant* and *Confident*, and of the *Crafty* and *Deceitful*; and make the *Scripture* it self, the foundation and rule of Religion, hourly liable to such freakish and wild Expositions, as will make it most unlike it self, and least able to be that, for which it was designed: Even a compleat Rule of Faith and Conversation, Truth and Honesty. And that there is more than a possibility of what I speak, those have sufficiently inform'd us, who have expounded *Scripture* out of its Senses, and have so Commented the *Laws* thereof till they have in them no manner of *Obligation*. Who have made the Creation of the World an *Allegory*, the Redemption of Man a *Metaphor*, and Heaven and Hell but a *Trope*. And if we

were to trace all the Heresies from the time of *Simon Magnus* down to our own, we shall find them to have risen from making God's *Word* to speak according to the *Interest* and *Passions* of such men, as had once got into their hands the liberty of teaching the People. Men have generally heard of *Julian's* contrivance to ruine Christianity, and that it was a granting all the Sects thereof a liberty of *Assembling* when they pleased, and teaching what they would. *Ut quisque nullo vetante Religioni sua serviret intrepidus*, (*Ammianus Marcellinus Lib. 22.*) to give every one, who pleases, a liberty to promote their own opinions, and serve the Interest of their Sect. Now it cannot be hoped that where Religion is settled in the greatest *Purity* and *Truth*, it should there continue long in that State, if every one without danger of punishment may falsify and corrupt it. And how this will be prevented where all that please may *preach*, I am not yet able to imagine.

And as this Indiscrimination of Teachers will thus expose Religion to perpetual Corruptions; so will it have but little better influence upon the peace and safety of the State. For when every one hath a liberty to Teach what and whom he pleaseth, we may conclude

from the natural Pride of men, they will desire to raise a *Sect* and become Head of a *Party*. Over whose Consciences when they have once got a competent Power, it will not be long till they will have both their persons, and fortunes at their Devotion. And their Gather'd Churches will be soon trained into an Army, there being no fitter materials of New *Troops*, than New Profelytes. Who being imployed in the first warmth and briskness of their *Zeal*, will not stick at any Attempt tending to the Advancement of their *Way*; and to the removal of whatsoever obstructs their design. And though the pretence of all this be *Conscience* and *Zeal for the Lord*, the *Removal of Abuses*, and *The publick Welfare*; Yet every Male-content will help to encrease the Cry, and all the Sons of Ambition, Covetousness, Envy and Revenge, will empty themselves into the Faction. And those who least Care for Religion, will yet make it their pretext to ruine that which is *Established*, and therewith the State. The sad truth of which Observation dear-bought experience doth every where attest.

Now, if this levelling of the Clergy, by granting to every one that lifts leave
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to invade their Office, will inevitably prove fatal both to Religion and Government; *Church* and *State*; it will then be the best Policy and most certain interest to maintain the *Priesthood* in its primitive *Esteem*. And seeing too that the *Calling* of the *Clergy* is of Divine Authority, it must needs render all pretences of condemning it upon the Account of its Original, Atheistical and Blasphemous; and all Usurpation thereof, Sacrilegious and Profane.

And having in the antecedent Discourse offer'd at something of Apologetick in behalf of the Clergy in General, by proving the *Divine Authority*, and Catholick Esteem, of their Calling; So the succeeding Sheets design a more particular Apology for the present Clergy of this Church. Which may be plainliest done by answering the spurious, and setting down the real occasions, and grounds of their Contempt.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

How the Clergy in all Ages have undergone Contempt: The Character of their Contemners, &c.

BEfore we enquire into the Pretences which are commonly brought for the Contempt we speak of, it will be expedient to consider, that the despising of the Clergy has been the unhappy carriage of other Ages as well as our own. Which is a thing so deplorably manifest, that we need not much insist, either upon its proof or declaration. For if we soberly consult the Oracles of God, they will yield us undeniable attestations, that to Contemn the *Stewards of Mysteries*, is a disease so Epidemical in respect of time, that it may seem to have been intailed upon the several Generations of Mankind, as *Gehazi's Leprosie* was upon his Children. For if we begin with *Enoch*, who was but the Seventh from *Adam*, and the first *Clergy-man* the Scripture mentions, though he was one, whose upright Conversation obviated all Exceptions, as *Walking with God and pleasing him*; and one who became

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became an Example of Religiousness to all Generations: Yet for all this, he in his own Person met with Obloquy and hard Speeches, and prophesied of Men who would so treat the Clergy until the Consummation of all things. Upon whom God at last shall send his Holy Myriads, infinite Armies of Angels to take Vengeance.

Nor did it fare better herein with *Noah*, notwithstanding that he also *Walked with God and pleased him, and was a Pledge of the World, and a Preacher of Righteousness*: And so wanted nothing to recommend him to the Respect and Reverence of his Age. Yet for many Years he was so far despised, that none took notice of his Sermons, unless to deride and pervert them. For we read not of any who were reclaim'd by his preaching, but that all remain'd in as much carnal Supineness, obstinacy and disobedience, as if *Noah* had never told them of their imminent danger and destruction by a Deluge; and by his building of an *Ark*, given them a sensible Demonstration of what he foretold. For they ate and drank, and followed their old trade of taking strange Women to their Wives, and regarded not till the Flood came and swept them all away. If *I might here insert Moses* among the *Priests*, because he was sent from

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from God to preach deliverance to *Israel*, we shall find him every where vilified and contemn'd. The first Essay of his Message was entertain'd with a petulant Questioning of his Authority ; *Who made thee a judge over us?* And through the whole *Sacred Legend* of his *Life*, we find him continually opposed and spoke against by *Conjurers, factious and gain-saying Zealots*, and the *humoresome, and uncertain multitude*. And as to the first High-Priest under the law, the Behaviour of *Corah* and his adherents toward him, is a sufficient Testimony and Illustration of the incorrigible impudence in contemnners of Priests.

And letting pass the Ancient Patriarchs, who had no part of their Life free from *Contumelies* and *Reproaches*; if we look in to the times of the Prophets, we may learn the Lot of them all, from that of *Jeremy*, who was mock't, jeer'd, and droll'd upon, meerly for being a Prophet of the Lord. But we need not fasten upon Particulars, because we find by the general Account given of the Prophets Sufferings, that they were no less than cruel *Mockings and Scourgings, Bands and Imprisonments*, and the most exquisite kinds, and Martyrdoms; being *destitute afflicted, and tormented*.

Nor were the Clergy better dealt with

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in the times of the Gospel: For in the Years of its greatest Efficacy, when the Apostles preach'd it with the purest zeal, noblest *Industry*, wisest *Courage*, and in the true *Evidence and Demonstration of the Spirit*, they were traduced for the vilest Offenders, and accounted no better than the off-scouring and Laughing-games, *Catharmata*, ac *Ludibria* (as a *Modern Apologist*) of the whole World. We find one of them stoned to death by those, who were not able to resist the *Wisdom* and the *Spirit* by which he spake. At one place a Sorcerer, at another a Mechanick, and at a third a sect of *Restless Fanaticks* revile St. Paul. At *Ephesus* the Tradesmen impeach him, in *Asia* a sort of vile Apostates utterly deny his Power; and we cannot be ignorant, how Reverendly the Apostle was treatted by the *Virtuosi* at *Athens*, when they called him (*Spermologus*) an empty, idle, talkative fellow.

But the one Example of our Saviour ought to supersede all other in this Concern, who was despised and rejected of Men, and not esteemed of in the World; whose Kindred said he was beside himself, and many said he had a Devil and was mad; who by some was called Inchanter, Sorcerer, and by others Samaritan, Beelzebub, Glutton, Drunkard: And to accomplish

accomplish their slander of his Credit, they unjustly Scourged and most Cruelly Crucified his Person, and put him to open shame. And to leave them without any colour of reply, they acted all this Villany against Christ, when he was preaching the Glorious Gospel of Salvation; and therein laying down such Rules of Life, as were more enlightning of the Mind, more advancing of humane Nature, and more directly tending to the Introduction and Settlement of Piety, Justice, and Good-will, among Men, than was contain'd either in the Law of Moses, or the Institutions of the wisest Philosophers, as Orpheus, Pythagoras, Numa, Plato, who were in some sort Reformers of the World.

Now if the Prophets, Apostles, and Our Lord himself, were vexed and interrupted with Rebukes, Revilings, Disputes, Contumelies, &c. whilest they pressed the World to believe and practise the Truth; it is then abundantly clear, that the Contempt of the Clergy is no new Invention, nor to be wonder'd at as the Monster of the present Age; but that it hath ever been the practice of Unreasonable Men. For there is no place or time to be met with, since the planting or growth of Religion, wherein its Ministers have not by some been contemptuously

usly treated: And we have no great hopes to meet herein with Amendment, who live in those latter Days, in which St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Jude, with one mouth assure us; that there should not only be a departue from the Faith, but also Scoffers and Cruel Mockers, both of the Gospel and its Ministers; and a Race of Ungodly Men who would make the Gospel it self matter of Obloquy and Shame to those who preach it. Of which sort were those Miscreants, who put St. Paul upon the Apology: *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

And therefore the present Clergy ought not to repine or murmur to see themselves so badly dealt with by the World, when they shall be so far recollected as to consider, that after the same manner it hath also dealt with the Prophets, Apostles, and Christ himself. And it is enough for the Disciple that he be as his Master, and the Servant as his Lord: If they have called the Master of the house *Beelzebub*, how much more shall they call those of his Household? The most that a Disciple or Servant can aspire to, is to come to his Master's Perfection. Whom if the World has reviled under

under the most hateful and ignominious to expect to be proportionably dealt with in their respective Orders and Places. And as Christ exhorted his first Clergy not to despond or be terrified by any thing should befall them, but on the contrary to be Courageous, and Undaunted in their Ministry: So the *Regular* Clergy of our own Church, ought not to let their present Contempt damp their Spirits depress their Courage, dishearten their Industry, or weaken their hands *in the work of the Lord*. For duly considered, this doubt altogether oblige them to a more signal care, that through this Cloud of *Ignominy* and Contempt, their innocency may break forth as the Light, and their justice dealing as the Noon-day. And with a greater zeal they should now *magnify their Office* the more, assert the Sacredness and Honor of their Calling, against the *Affronts* and *Prejudices* of an unpropitious and gainsaying World.

'Tis true, the contempt we speak of is able to vie Antiquity with the best things; but the Persons that now use it have no more cause to glory in this Antiquity, *than in murder and lying*, which are no less Ancient than the *Old Serpent*. Nor will they have greater Reason to vindicate themselves upon the *Quality* of

of their Predecessors; when they shall see them to have been persons of *Corrupt Judgments; Factious, Schismatical, and Apostates.* Men of the greatest Vices, and basest Interests; of the worst Principles and most ill-govern'd Passions; Rash, Inconsiderate and Foolish in the *Things of God.* Raging Waves of the Sea, foaming out their own shame. The rest of whose Character may be made out of *St. Jude*; one main end of whose Epistle was to acquaint the World what kind of Persons those are who *Speak evil of Dignities,* or deal contumeliously with the Clergy. And *St. Peter* speaking of the same Subject, describes the Contemners to be a bold, insolent sort of Men, *Pet. 2. 10. &c.*

CHAP. IX.

Survey of the pretences for the Contempt of the Clergy: First, want of Example.

THE first Pretence, which with greatest speciousness and plausibility is brought to justify the Contempt
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of the Clergy, is the Faultiness of their carriage. For this being once surmised, we quickly find them reflected upon, with a *Physician Cure thy self; Pluck the Beam out of thine own Eye; Thou that teachest others, why dost thou not teach thy self? Thou that sayest another shall not steal, dost thou commit Sacrilege? Turpe Doctori, &c.* Such as these are the usual Topicks whence Contempt is poured upon the Clergy in general, especially by those who by an Uncharitable *Synecdoche* impute unto All the failures of a very Few; Making the whole twelve to be unfaithful, because one of them betray'd his Master. And yet were this Accusation as true, as it is manifestly otherwise; and that the Clergy were as ill-govern'd Men, as those usually are who despise them: Yet those who reflect upon Mens Bad Examples (when they may possibly happen) to the prejudice of their Calling, seem either not rightly to understand, or not duly to consider what that is, which with so much noise they make use of.

For if they did either clearly apprehend, or maturely weigh, the Nature and importance of Examples, they would certainly confess, that the *Bad* are utterly to be avoided, and the *Good* never

be made the *Rule* and measure of our *Actions*. But that the best *Examples* are chiefly to be looked upon, as helps and furtherances, *Spurs* and *Incentives* to well-doing. And that when we grow dull and unactive, flat and drowsie in our Duties, we may rouse and awaken our selves to a greater Vigour and Fer- vency, by reflecting upon the Zeal and Industry of others. 'Tis true, Example is a very short and plain way of In- struction; but it is true also, that as our Actions at the last shall be *Examin'd*, *Tried*, and *Sentenced*, so they are now to be *Directed*, only by *Divine Precept*. He therefore justly incurs the Imputation of obeying Man rather than God, who in this case follows *Example*, and not the *Commandment*. Those who upon this account assault the Clergy with no less clamour, than I am afraid ill-will, seem not always to be Men of so much justice and Ingenuity, as to afford that good Example, they so loudly call for. Notwithstanding that every one from the *Scepter*, are obliged to *Exemplary Conversation*, as well, as those of the Priesthood. For as to the influence of Examples it is proportiona- ble the same in all Ranks of Men, and

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at the great impartial Audit, Accounts thereof, will undoubtedly be exacted *without Respect of Persons*; and the People as strictly reckon'd with, as the *Priests*. The Quality of Persons can make no Alteration in the Nature of things, nor render that a Vice or Vertue in one Man, which is none in another. And when Men of any Rank or Condition, high or low, become defective in that Exemplariness of Life, which the Quality and Relation wherein they stand, require from them; then I conceive that all those Coals may be heap'd upon their Heads, which with so great impetuosity are cast upon the Clergies.

It will also highly import those, who Contemn the Clergy upon the Account we now speak of, to be soberly careful, lest by giving too much to their Personal Concernments, they make not the Power and efficacy of God's Ordinances to depend upon the Holiness of those, who dispense them. And if in some measure Men were not tainted with this Error, they would fix their Eyes upon God and his Institution, and look upon the Ministers of his *Word* and *Sacraments*, &c. As the *Greek Church* do (in the *Euchologue* p. 23. already mentioned:) wherein she praiseth God, that

of his infinite Condescension he hath given them Masters and Teachers, not only of the same Nature and like infirmities with themselves, *but also of like guilt, and under the same Condemnation.* And we have no small Obligation to be truly thankful to the Almighty, that he hath placed in the Ministry of the Glorious Gospel, such to offer Spiritual Oblations and Sacrifices in behalf of the People, as have a sense of their Infirmities; *and who in themselves know the Burden and subtilty of Sin.* To whom our Access might be the more free and easie, and whom we are to value according to their Office: And Imployment. For who is *Paul*, or who is *Apollos*, but Ministers by whom we believe? Even as God gave to every Man. *Paul* may plant, and *Apollos* Water: But neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the Increase. If the eloquent *Apollos*, or learned *Paul*, live the holy lessons they teach, it is their Crown and Praise; and likewise of great moment to the People, who out of weakness and infirmity, are hardly brought to believe the Truth of that Doctrin, which is not attested by the Example and Practice of those who

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preach it. But still the Water is the same, and as full of cooling and refreshment, whether the Pipe be of Lead or Gold, that conveys it. The Jewel suffers no diminution in its real worth or value, because it is lodged in a wooden Casket. And the Gospel of Christ is still the Power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth, tho never so great unworthiness attend their Persons who declare it.

It fares with Christ's Embassadors, as with those of Earthly Princes, whose Deportment, though it sink below their Character; yet that doth no way evacuate the Power of their Commission, or render ineffectual what according to their Master's order they transact in his Name. And that this is the plain Case of the Clergy, we may learn from the Blessed Author of Christianity, in *Mat.* 23. 2, 3. And if God, whose ways are past finding out, should set over us as *Bad Guides* as those our Saviour there speaks of; Men who live not at all according to their own *Prescriptions*: Yet we are to respect their *Office*, and *Doctrine*, and not their *Actions* and *Manners*; to *observe* and *do* what they *Teach*, but not to do after their *Works*: And to laud and praise God, that he hath so far con-

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considered the Frailties of Men, and worth
of his own Ordinances, as to tye the Effi-
cacy thereof to any thing in their Dispensers,
but to his own Institution. St. *Augustin*
in his Prologue to his *Books of Christian*
Doctrin) observes, that *Paul*, though at
first he was instructed by *Advice* from
Heaven, was afterward sent to a Man to
receive the Sacraments, and to be joyned
to the Church: And that though an An-
gel declared the Approbation of *Corne-*
lius's Prayers and Alms-deeds; yet he
was not to rest there, but to send to
Peter, both to receive Baptism from
him, and to be instructed what he was
to believe, *Hope* and *Love*. If all things
should have been transacted by Angels,
how mean and abject would this have
render'd the Condition of Men! Or, if
God should not vouchsafe to speak to
Men by Men, how could that be true,
that Man is the Temple of God (1 Cor.
3) seeing Responses are not given out of
that Temple, but that all Man's instruction
should immediately sound from Heaven?
Charity which doth bind Men with the
bond of Unity, and as it were mix and
blend Minds together, would have no oc-
casion or opportunity for this excellent
work, if there were nothing that one

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Man might learn of another, but that all were to be done by Angels. And the same Father justly makes it a singular Act of *Divine* Wisdom, to send the Eunuch to *Philip*, or appoint Men, and not Angels to instruct the Church; to constitute Teachers of our own Passions, and to dispense this Heavenly Treasure out of Earthen Vessels; that the whole excellency of the Power might be of God. But to proceed: Grant that the Clergy were as faulty in their Conversation as we are willing to represent them, yet this may move us to reflect upon ourselves, and to Consider, whether it may not be our own fault, that our Spiritual Guides are so Faulty; and that if we are slain under the inconvenience of Bad Shepherds, whether it is not because we deserve no better. For when God told *Israel* that he would give them Pastors according to his own mind, who should feed them with knowledge and understanding, if they would cease to be disobedient Children, and turn from the Evil of their ways, *Jer. 3. 13.* He plainly shew'd, that the way to have Faultless Teachers, was to reform our selves; and to endeavour to deserve better at God's Hand, if in this Case he deals strictly

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strictly with us. However we cannot but surcease to condemn our Pastors upon the account of their failings, unless that we are either innocent our selves, or being guilty can be content to be depised upon that Score.

But yet seeing that a worse Use is made of the Clergies, than of any other mens irregularities; and that we are generally prone to follow them in the steps that are foulest: And seeing that there is a set of Men who are not only curious to Observe, but greedy to suck up the very Regs of their actions; and who strive to imitate their Spiritual Guides, as the *Greeks* did their Orators and Philosophers, only in their *Weakness* and *Imperfections*: Seeing likewise that men are apt to make choice of the worst part of the Example, and to take more notice of one single miscarriage, than of *thousand* good actions: And what is yet more deplorable, seeing that contrary to all sobriety and duty, not a few are forward to expose the Nakedness of their Fathers; and contrary to all equity and justice, (as in the Case of *Eli's* Sons) to abhor the service of God, for the faults of the Priest: After these considerations, I cannot be so blinded

blinded with affection to the men I speak
 of, as not to think it their bounden
 duty to give all diligence to shew them-
 selves patterns of good works, Incorrupti-
 ness, Gravity, and Sincerity, and to be
 Examples in Word, in Conversation, in
 Charity, in Faith, in Purity. That in
 so doing they may both save themselves,
 and them that hear them. And at the
 same time make those ashamed, who
 speak against them, as having no evil
 to say of them, or lay to their Charge.
 And as for those (as doubtless some
 there may be) who do otherwise, I
would (in the sense and Language of the
 Holy Ghost) *they were even cut off*. But
 as for mine own part, *when I see him*
that binds up my wounds, to be careless of
his own; that he walks in darkness, by
 whose Candle I am enlightned; or that
 he becomes a Cast-away, who is the In-
 strument of my Salvation; I will pity
 his Condition, and use his Ministry as
 God has appointed: leaving him to re-
 ceive as he deserves, and to stand or
 fall to his own Master. For I dare
 not reproach the hand, be it never so
 Leprous, by which I am help'd to *Clean-*
sing: nor insult over their wanderings,
 by whose directions I walk aright. And
 though

ough the miscarriages of my Guide be
ever so hainous, I shall neither an-
swer nor be punished for them, if I
have no way contributed to their Com-
mission.

C H A P. X.

*Survey of the Pretences of the Con-
tempt of the Clergy: Secondly, Idle-
ness.*

WHat has been spoken in the An-
tecedent Chapter, may both help
rectifie a common and usual mistake
concerning Examples in general; and al-
so suggest a little more Sobriety to those
who so eagerly manage the supposed
want thereof in the Clergy, to their
reparable *Disparagement*. Because it
lets them see how that every tittle of
their Argument may recoil upon them-
selves. And how we all (*Ceteris pari-*
bus) are as much obliged to an Exem-
plary Conversation, and wanting it are
much to be blamed, as those from
whom we so rigourously exact it.

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But because we are herein to deal with men, who usually esteem all serious consideration meer dulness and drudgery; it cannot be hop'd, that what has been spoken should prove much Operative upon them; or, that if it should happen that the *Contemners* should be so far moved with what has been said as to quit this first pretence of their Contempt; yet their great desire to finish what they have begun, will quickly furnish them with other Pretences. And here it will be easie to suppose them assaulting the Credit of the Clergy with the old Accusation of *Idleness*. Which I confess is a Vice of so debasing a quality, that it may justly lessen the Reputation of any man who therewith is infected. And it is likewise so inconsistent with the Work (or Office) of the Ministry, that I am perswaded there is none of that *Calling*, can be guilty thereof at least not in that degree, in which a *Maligning World* would represent them to be.

For if we may suppose the present Clergy to be men of so much understanding as to know the Nature of *Idleness* and Industry: That according to a Prophet of their own, *There is nothing more troublesome to a good mind, than to do nothing*.

nothing. "That *Idleness* is no less devoid of Comfort than of Profit. While both are the genuin Incomes of *Industry*. That besides the furtherance of their Estate, the Mind doth both delight and better it self by Exercise. That it fares with most *as with the Man* after God's own heart, whom no Temptation durst assail while he was taken up with business of Importance, and the publick Cares of State, &c. When this and infinite more, becomes the matter of a Clergyman's thoughts (or indeed of any) he cannot but have all *Idleness* and *Sloth* not only under a jealous, but a detestable aspect.

And yet its sordid Nature doth not render it fitter for our avoidance than its consequences; which though to all are very pernicious, yet to none more than to the Clergy. As may be collected from those fearful Comminations so frequently denounced against such *Pastors*, as through their *Idleness* destroy and scatter the Sheep of God's Pasture. To whom the Lord saith expressly: "I will visit you for the wickedness of your works, and the Remnant of my Sheep will I gather together, and bring them to their Folds, and I will set up Shepherds over them that will feed them. And the

"Threat,

"Threatning reaches all those Shepherds
 "who take more care to feed themselves
 "than the Flocks : who eat the Fat, and
 "Clothe themselves with the Wool, but
 "look not to the strengthening of the
 "weak, the healing of the sick ; to bind
 "up the broken, to bring home again
 "that which was driven away, and to en-
 "quire after that which was lost. All
 which Sheep the Lord hath sworn to re-
 quire at the hands of such careless Shep-
 herds. As may be seen in *Jer. 23.* and
Ezek. 34. A great part of which Chap-
 ters was inspired to this purpose. To
 this may be added *St. Paul's* advice to the
 Asian Clergy, *Act. 20. 28.* Take heed
 to your selves and to all the Flock over
 which the Holy Ghost hath made you
Overseers, to feed the Church of God
 which he hath purchased with his own
 blood. And *2 Tim. 4. 1.* I charge
 thee before God and the Lord Jesus
 Christ, who shall judge the quick and
 the dead, when he appears in his King-
 dom: Preach the word, be instant in
 season, out of season, reprove, rebuke,
 exhort with all lenity and diligent in-
 struction. Now if it be safe for us to
 presume the Clergy both to read and
 weigh those dreadful Menaces, so fre-
 quently utter'd from God, by the mouth

of his Prophets, against Sloath and Care-
lessness in his Messengers; or those many
earnest Exhortations of the Holy Apo-
stles for its prevention and amendment;
we may Charitably conclude, that they
will not dare to take part therewith, not
only for fear of Man's Contempt, but the
consuming *Wrath* of God,

And if we may further presume, that
there is so much understanding yet left in
the Clergy, as to enable them to appre-
hend the greatness of their Task, and how
it is no less than to raise up *the salm King-*
dom of Christ, and to demolish that of
Satan, &c. and how that the fruits of
so doing are no meaner, than the saving
of their own Souls, and theirs too of
whom they have taken the charge, and
one day must give an Account. If we
may yet further presume, that the Clergy
in some tolerable manner compre-
hend the Importance of those several
Titles, with which the Holy Ghost hath
invested them; and how that they are
as so many Memorials and Monitors of
Labour, Diligence and *Care*. In short:
we may presume the Clergy, like o-
ther Men, to wear their Eyes in their
heads, and apprehend and consider such
obvious and plain things as we now
speak;

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speak ; it may be hoped, upon the stock
 of common Ingenuity, that they will
 never suffer themselves to run to mofe,
 or let God's House drop through by rea-
 son of the Idleness of *their* Hands ; or in-
 dure to see the Flocks depending upon
 their feeding, to grow cold in their
 zeal, drooping in their Courage, faint-
 ing in their Spiritual Strength, and infec-
 bled in all their Graces. And all this to
 please a Vice which is unmanly in it self
 foully derogatory to the Honour of their
 Calling, contradictory to their Pastor
 Character, and in *Them* of more dreadful
 Consequences, than it can possibly be
 in any *other*.

In the last place, if we may suppose the
 Clergy to remember, and make consci-
 ence of that promise of *Faithful diligence*
 which they made to God and the Church
 when they were received into *Holy Or-*
ders ; this alone will be sufficient effect-
 ally to bind them to bend their whole
 endeavours, without Fraud or Sophisti-
 cation, to the due discharge of their
Office ; being well assured that small
 benefit will accrew to the Church from
 their *Abilities*, if they be not *Faithful*
 For the Clergy cannot be ignorant that
 their *Sufficiency without Endeavours*

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do that good which their *Place* requires,
is no better than wrapping the Talent
in a Napkin. Industry with lesser Parts
more serviceable to Religion, than great
learning without it. And an *Idle*, is
little better than a *Blind Guide*. And
being persuaded that these things are
the matter of the Clergies serious medi-
tation, I cannot imagine they should e-
ver be guilty of that *Idleness* which is
malapertly laid at their door. But I
am rather induced to believe that that
which in them bears this Odious Name, is
nothing else *but the Regular* performance
of their Duty: Partly occasion'd by *their*
Marriage, who prefer the pleasing of some
Sens *Caprices* before the observation
of their Rule. In which rank it may
be no great iniquity to place all those,
who make all other Parts of the Church
subservient to the *Pulpit*. By which they
have occasion'd a Capricious sort of
people to conclude all *Publick Service* to
be *preaching*, and to esteem all those to
be dumb Dogs, who open not as often
as they please, and in a sense different
from the Apostles, *preach* the Word in
Season and out of Season. But as for
my own Part, when I observe our
Clergy to *pray, preach and Catechize* as
the

the Church enjoyns and directs them
 When I see them careful to fort and
 feed their Flocks according to their
 Age and Condition, giving to every
 one his Portion in due Season, and with
 fidelity, prudence and industry, observ-
 ing the Rules of their Sacred Function.
 I cannot but think those Men to be for-
 saken both of all justice and ingenuity,
 who now condemn them upon the score
 of *Idleness*. But if there be any who
 are herein delinquent; it were more
 justice and generosity to give a Cata-
 logue of such Drones to those who
 have an undoubted Power to make
 them *Labour*, or *Unhive* them; And
 that the Righteous be not as the Wicked.

CHAP. XI.

A View of the Pretences of the Con- tempt of the Clergy : Thirdly of Pride

I Shall not here attempt any Philosophi-
 cal Discourse either of the Nature
 or Causes of Pride. All that concerns
 our present Enquiry falls under either
 the contrariety that it bears to the pre-
 ed.

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Office and Command of Christ, or the Danger and odiousness thereof in his Ministers.

And as to the first of these, it is so apparent in the Holy Gospel, that none can be ignorant thereof who is not an utter stranger to that inspired System of Christianity. For we plainly find there, how the *Blessed* Author of our Faith shows Favour to none but the Humble, nor will admit any to be of his train, who has not first Learned of him to be *Meek and Lowly*. And Christ speaking of that Prelation, and Government, which was to be in his Church, he sufficiently intimated that he would not have it to be like that of the World, *that is*, not a Government whose Dominion is Despotic; the *Coercion* imperious; the Laws externally Compulsory; the Titles big and swelling. But on the Contrary he hath insinuated how he would have the Government of the Church to be paternal and persuasive, the Laws to be full of Admonition, the Titles of the Governours to be significative of Affection and Labour, of Meekness and Humility: And the Highest Ministry, a meek Ministration, and a Labourious Employment. And when the A-

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postles fell into an Ambitious quarrelling which of them should be greatest, Christ checkt their Pride, and gave them this Everlasting Rule of Clerical deportment; He that will be *Greatest among you, let him be your Servant*. And we need come no nearer to discover the Odiousness of Pride in Christ's Ministers, seeing both by his Example and Precept he hath thus recommended to them the clear contrary. And certainly Christ would have those, who for their Greater Dignities in the Church are styled *Stars*, and *Angels*, to imitate the one, by appearing less for their greater Height; and the other, who though Peers of Heaven, yet approve themselves *Ministring Spirits* to the poorest of God's Servants upon Earth.

And the same Rule of Clerical Deportment, laid down by our Blessed Saviour, is no very dark intimation, that the Clergy are in danger to fall into this sin. And we want not Reason to be hereof suspicious, when we consider that Pride being an Internal Vice, is apt to make impression upon those Notions and Speculations of the Mind, wherein the Office of the Clergy renders them more egregiously Conversant. For as Pride took up its first Seat in a *Spiritual*

ritual Being : so it hath ever since acted with greatest vigor in Spiritual Concernments, and been most liable to Spiritual Persons. In whom it can never happen without working a less mischief, than Strife and Contention. And indeed it seems impossible to be otherwise, seeing Pride naturally exerts it self above Competition, and superadds disdain and revenge to actuate its other Motions. As was seen in his Case, who being denied a Bishoprick sought to be revenged upon Episcopacy. And as *Solomon's* Arraignment of Pride for the Mother of Contention, is true in the General ; so it is more especially true of those Contentions, wherewith the Church in any Age hath been afflicted : There being none to be met with wherein Pride, under several appearances, hath not been a principal Actor. And without all further Enlargement, I am sufficiently inclined to believe, upon the account of what is now suggested, that there is no Clergy-man will venture to give the least Entertainment to a sin, which hath been the Mother of so much mischief both in Heaven and Earth. For how tolerable soever this Vice may seem in men of another Character ; yet it can never hope for excuse or mitigation in their

Carriage, who are his Ministers, among whose wonderful virtues, none was more *Stupendious*, than his own *Humility*.

And therefore that which most commonly, and with greatest assured, some men call Pride in the Clergy, seems to be nothing else, but a keeping themselves from those *Promiscuous Familiarities*, which experience and reason tell them, are apt to be attended with *Contempt* and *Disrespect*.

Now, if upon their Separation to the Work of the Ministry, the Clergy betake themselves to a *Reverend and Pious Reservation* as men professing Retirement from the World above others; if out of a Conscientious apprehension that an undifferenced Conversation with the Laity (of what Rank soever) is altogether contrary to the Calling of the Clergy; if out of fear that a too free Communion with the people will lessen their Authority, and rebate the force of their Instructions and Reproofs, when there is most need to deliver them with the greatest Vigour and Power; if foreseeing that this Communion (I now speak of) may engage them if not to commit, yet often to connive at those things, which they ought altogether to rebuke; and that it is one Engine

to break down the Veneration, which is the Fence to their Function against all Popular Rudeness and Encroachments: if some (I say) of these Considerations, or all in Consort, shall justly move the Clergy to such a Religious distance and Retirement from the *Conversations* of the World, as the *Inconsiderate* may call Pride; they ought with great satisfaction to bear the imputation, and to account it their Crown to be contemn'd upon this Score. Especially when they shall consider that their Carriage herein is agreeable to the Canons, Constitutions and Decrees of the Ancient Church, and to the Canons and Injunctions of *our own*; and no way clashing with the Rules of a prudent and Charitable Conduct. As to our own Church, "She commands all Ecclesiastical Persons, not to resort to any Taverns or Ale-houses, for any other cause, than for their honest necessities. And that after their Meals they shall not give themselves to *Drinking* or *Riot*, nor spend their time idly by day or night, at Dice, Cards, or Tables, or any unlawful game. But at all times, as they shall have leisure, to hear or read some

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“ part of the Holy *Scriptures*, or im-
 “ ploy themselves with some other ho-
 “ nest Studie or Exercise. Always do-
 “ ing the things which appertain to ho-
 “ nesty, and the Profit of the Common-
 “ wealth. Ever having in their mind,
 “ that they ought to excel all others in
 “ purity of life, and to be Examples to
 “ the people to live well and Christian-
 “ ly. *And there was also a time when the*
 “ Clergy of this Nation was forbid to
 “ keep Hounds, *Accipitres & Falcones,*
 “ &c. And as concerning the mind of
 the Ancient Church in this particular,
 it is sufficiently apparent in those Ca-
 nons, which forbid the Clergy secular
 Sports and Recreations ; and all such
 Correspondencies, Entertainments, and
 Familiarities with the Laity, as were
 not the Product of their Office. And
 this was done not out of any supercili-
 ous moroseness to restrain, but out of a
 wary foresight to conciliate Reverence to
 the Clergy. To whose Profession they saw
 nothing was more contrary than too great
 indifferency of conversing with the peo-
 ple, whom they were to instruct. With
 whom they must not hope long to en-
 joy that Credit and Reverence (due
 to their Order,) which is founded upon
 the

the Gravity, Abstinence, Sobriety and Reseration of their Persons, if they license themselves that secular Freedom to which we now plead against. I have observed a Numerous Clergy *in the Roman, and not a few in our own Church*, though of no greater *Parts or Vertues* than others, to have secured to themselves a great share of Veneration, chiefly upon the account of a cautious Retreat from the Usages, and Liberties of the *Many*.

C H A P. XII.

A Survey of the pretences of the Contempt of the Clergy: Fourthly of Covetousness.

THE last Pretence for the Contempt of the Clergy, which we shall take notice of in this discourse, is their Covetousness. And this imputation usually ariseth from a prejudicate consideration of the Clergies carriage: First, in looking after the Incomes which are appointed for their Maintenance. Secondly in the frugal management of those Incomes.

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Incomes. And lastly, in their seeking after Preferment.

And first, those who Contemn the Clergy for Covetousness, because they are diligent and careful to look after the things which are allotted for their subsistence, may manage the same Argument with as much Justice, though perhaps not with so much speciousness, against all those who are studious to reap the due fruits and benefits of their *Places*, and *Professions*; though they have not (all things consider'd) so great an obligation for so doing, as the Clergy. Whom we must needs confess to be the *Stewards* of God's *Patrimony*, as well as of *his Mysteries*: and that in both it is required of them to be found faithful. To the discharge of which trust they will have but small reason to intitle themselves, unless they be exactly vigilant to preserve those dues, rights and profits which the *Laws of God* and the *Land*, have annexed to the Church, and not to suffer that to be cunningly embezel'd, unjustly defalcated, or *Alienated* which the *Bounty*, and *Pity* of Religious *Ancestors* devoted to the support and maintenance of the most *Holy Worship*. and *preisthood* that ever was in the world. But why should the Clergy be thought covetous because by just and amicable *Methods* they

they are diligent in the preservation of that wherewith they are intrusted; and that out of a due sense that the burden of Sacrilege is already too heavy upon the Nation, they labour to prevent its growing heavier, by saving men from that most execrable sin, from which none can be free, who endeavour to defraud the Church, and which not a few are ready to do, if not studiously prevented? Now, if this be the Case of the Clergies Covetousness in the first instance thereof, let it be left to him *That judgeth righteous judgment.*

Nor can they with any better colour brand, *As Covetous*, the Clergies wary and frugal management of their Incomes, so long as they are merciful to their power; and that their Alms are cheerful, and their Hospitality charitable; though they never meddle with those secular Entertainments, and expensive Correspondencies, to which the occasions of their *Office*, and expressions of *Charity* do neither oblige, nor invite them. And if the Clergy according to the best and Ancientest Canons, secure the interest of the poor in the goods of the Church, reserving unto themselves only such a portion thereof, as may suffice for *their own sober maintenance*, and to make honest provision for their

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their Families, and not tenaciously to hoard them up for no better purposes than either to gratifie a covetous humour, or to furnish out a Worldly pomp and parade; or what is not much better, to enrich a Relation, that in the next Age, if not sooner, will Contemn his *Extraction*, and vilify the *Function*, by which he was raised. But on the contrary, if the Clergy are conscientiously careful not to dissipate the *Spiritual Patrimony* in any needless profusions, idle curiosities, *unclerical splendor*, or any thing disagreeable to that Christian Austerity, and *Rigor*, which is ever to be expected in that *Calling*: But shall with a *Religious providence*, and Charitable Frugality, endeavour so to husband that *Holy pittance*, whereof they are not the *Proprietaries*, but *Stewards*, as to be just, and Charitable; they ought upon these terms neither to be censured, nor despised as Covetous. Which is an imputation never to be fasten'd upon any *Who do justice, and love mercy*. And we must think that *Order of men* we speak of, to be wonderfully devoid of conscience and ingenuity, when they are guilty of any egregious failures in the things now mention'd. Especially when they shall

shall perceive them to be so equitable in themselves, so answerable to the nature of their *Calling*, and so strictly in-joyn'd by the Laws of the Church, and so highly recommended by all the learned, and pious of their own Character and Profession.

As to the *Goods* of the Church, we know, they are frequently styled the *Goods* of the *Poor*; and the Ancient Church was so careful to maintain them in that state, that she allowed not a Bishop to bestow them upon their nearest Relations, furthen than to help them as they were indigent, lest they should be said to prey upon the Churches *Incomes*. I must take care (saith St. *Augustin*) lest the Estate of the Poor (which belongs to the Church of *Hippo*) be given to the *Rich*. In which matter I have hitherto quit my self well. For I have Kindred which call themselves *Noble*, who come to me being a Bishop (one while with Menaces, and another while with Flatteries) to to move me to confer something upon them because of our Relation, and yet through God's Grace I do not Remember, that I ever enriched any of them. Enough to this purpose is to be met with in the Canons concerning
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Ecclesiastical Discipline, and in those Authors who have writ *De Eccles. Repub.* I have been told that a late Bishop of this Nation in his Epistle to *Trinity-College* in *Cambridge*, (set before his *Mysteries of Christian Religion*) doth impute the late Sacrilege committed in this *Land* to the spending of *Church-Means* in an unchurch-like manner, and that this was done by the Clergies converting them to their private uses, or otherwise misemploying them. And there (saith he) God justly takes them away and permits Sacrilege; we our selves having first offended in the same kind. For certainly *Church-means* should have Relation as well to the use, as to the Persons; and a *Church-Man* in mis-spending them commits Sacrilege. And I find it likewise expressly affirm'd by a *Divine of Singular Learning and Piety* (in his *just Weights Measures*) that for any Degree or Order of the Clergy to increase their Estates out of *Church-goods*, was in the better and purer Times of Christianity, a thing which the Canons did not only prohibit, but make void. And that the Canons, from the Canon of the Apostles, to those at this Day in force in the Church of *Rome*, disable the Clergy to dispose of *Church-goods* by *Will* and Testament.

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In the 25th Session of the Council of Trent, and in the first Chapter concerning Reformation, among many other things very worthy of Remark, the Synod expressly forbids the Bishops to augment the Incomes of their Kindred, and Familiars with those of the Church: According to the Canons of the Apostles, prohibiting the Goods of the Church, which are God's, to be given to Relations; but if they are poor, to deal with them *as with the rest* of their Rank; and not to dissipate them for their sakes. *Imo quàm maximè potest, eos sancta Synodus monet, ut omnem humanum hunc erga fratres, Nepotes, propinquosque carnis affectum (unde multorum malorum in Ecclesia Seminarium extat) penitus deponant.* And what is said of the Bishops is also to be understood of the rest of the Clergy. 'Tis true where the Clergy (as in our own Church) have Liberty to marry, the Case seems to be *otherwise*; and the Church as she has given them leave to marry, must also give them leave even out of her own Revenues, to make provision for their Wives and Children. But this doth not abrogate, but only relax the Canons: And the married Clergy are herein to express a singular Moderation, and so to provide for Wife and Children

dren out of *Church-goods*, as not to extinguish the interest of the Poor therein. For I Humbly conceive that it is *no small mistake* in any Clergy-Man to imagine, that having out of the *Goods* of the *Church* soberly disposed of their Children in the World, they should also Labour to raise them Estates, and strive in their own Port to equal that of the higher Laity. With whom the Canons never intended them any other, or any more conversation than arose from the Tenor of their Function ; which requires that their chiefest Hospitality should respect the relief and support of the *Indigent* and *Necessitous* according to their power.

As to the last instance of Covetousness in the Clergy, which respects their eager hunting after Preferments, and Promotions in the Church, which the best and wisest have ever esteem'd a deplorable, and odious blemish in them, it surpasseth my abilities to indicate, and is against my conscience to excuse. And therefore I shall deeply lament, what I cannot redress; and humbly beseech Almighty God to restore those to a better mind, who herein are guilty. And that some are guilty in this particular, seems undeniable upon that general complaint made against that multiplicity of Church-preferments wherewith

wherewith not a few are always furcharged *Ridente fanatico, nec dolente Papista*: Or rather indeed to the distress and injury of those Clergy-men, who would esteem it a good Vintage, to have but the gleanings of their *Brethren*; and think themselves will provided for, if they had but one of those *Numerous preferments* which are so unreasonably piled upon such, as are no more laborious in the *Word* and *Doctrine*, than others. But I shall forbear to enlarge, lest I should be mistaken in this particular; and only make it my humble *Supplication*, that the *Canons*, respecting the Clergy in this *Affair*, may impartially be considered by them; to the end, that their manifest opposition to this enormous practice, may through God, somewhat contribute to its *Reformation*; or at least so far open their eyes, as to let them see the utter inexpediency, if not unlawfulness of what cannot be justified, or hardly excused.

That which we call *Pluralities* in this Church, has long time been complain'd of as a Thorn in her side; which some of the *Reverend Fathers* the Bishops, have very lately begun projecting to pull out. But in stead of the Extirpation of *Pluralities*, I could rather wish they were well prun'd; for till the abuse of them be retrench-

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ed, and they be restored to their first design, they will scarce be capable of any conscientious Apology. And it is to be hoped that those corruptions which tract of time and negligence of some, may seem to have brought upon the first indulgence thereof, might for the future be prevented, if three or four obvious things were duly taken notice of. As,

First, That those unto whom the granting of Dispensations is committed, or who otherwise have any part in the disposal of such Preferments as appertain unto Learned Men, would bethink themselves what it is to respect any *thing either above or beside Merit*; considering how hard the World taketh it, when to men of commendable Note and Quality there is so little respect had, or so great unto them, whose deserts are very mean; that nothing seems more strange than the promotion of one sort, because they are more accounted of, and the neglect of other, because they are. "It being every man's expectation and hope in the Church of God, that the only purchase of greater rewards should be always greater deserts, and that nothing should be able to plant a *Thorn* where a *Vine* ought to grow.

Secondly,

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Secondly, That Honorable Personages, and they who by vertue of any principal Office in the Common-wealth, are inabled to qualify a certain number, and to make them capable of Benefices and faculties above others, would not suffer their Privileges to be abused, contrary to the true intent and meaning of wholesom Laws, by men in whom there is nothing notable besides Covetousness and Ambition, too often also attended with Ignorance and Idleness.

Thirdly, That the Universities would bestow their Degrees not as meer kindnesses by way of Civility, but as Favours which always imply a Testimony given to the Church and Common-wealth, concerning mens sufficiency and merit for Manners and Knowledge. Considering that upon the credit of this Testimony sundry Statutes of the Realm are built, and that it is so far available that nothing is more respected for the Warrant of divers mens abilities to serve both in Church and State. And if the Universities shall violate that Religion wherewith this Testimony ought to be given, they do not only disparage themselves, if it be known; but also involve those in error, who seem it a thing uncivil to call the Cre-

dit of their Testimony in question, by doubting either of the Manners or Abilities of those, upon whom they have confer'd their *Degrees*. And therefore are never to be granted to any one without due *Caution*, and *Advice*.

Fourthly, That the Indulgence of Pluralities be restored to its first design, by being allowed only to men of *Note*, to signify and reward Eminent Services done for the Church; and to encourage a more remarkable progress in Vertue and Science. *Ends* shamefully neglected in the present Indulgence of Pluralities, if we consider who they are who most bountifully enjoy them.

In the last place, it would not a little help to the removal of the scandalous abuses crept into the *Indulgence* of Pluralities, if those who are so forward to enjoy it, would remember what in *Duty* and *Conscience* towards God and the Church they are bound to perform. For they cannot be ignorant that those to whom Plurality of Church-preferments is granted, are bound to requite that *Grant* by an industry answerable to that Plurality, and that they are to excel as much in *Labour*, as in *Dignity* and *Benefit*. And therefore unless they faithfully answer the Churches expectation, in bending
their

their labours to sow as well as reap, and to make their pains as far to exceed their Brethrens, as their Preferments and *Incomes*: In a word; unless they perform those Offices to which the very acceptance of plural Preferments and Benefices do formally bind, let them be well assured (*saith my pious and learned Author*) that the Honey which they eat by fraud, shall turn in the end to Gall; and that which was nutriment in the mouth, shall prove gravel in the bowels. And though their subtil and colourable dealing here may not be taken notice of in the walk of humane justice, yet *He, the Sacred Image of whose Wisdom appears in the Laws of men*, will at last severely punish it. And now the only Apology that can be made for the Clergy in this concern, will be their own speedy endeavours to grow innocent; by avoiding all those things for the time to come, which may occasion offending. And using no Methods in the obtaining Church-benefices, but such as are just, ingenuous, and Canonical. And waving all those Privileges, *which*, contrary to the primitive Canons, give Leave to hold Church-preferments in more Dioceses than one; An abuse (as one has well observed)

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brought in by the Papacy, when the See of Rome, seeking Benefices all over Christendom, granted Privileges to dissolve the Ancient Discipline, on purpose to enrich themselves and their Favorites.

But this which is now spoken, has no design to lay *Covetousness*, and therewith *Contempt*, at the door of any, who are studious first to *deserve*, and next to *obtain*, Plural Preferments upon the terms we have now mention'd: Nor yet to blame those, whom the scantiness of their present Fortunes move to seek for larger, on purpose to enable them to perform more singular services for God and the Church. But what has been said, respects those especially, who look not to be furnish'd with such qualifications as are supposed by that Indulgence of the Law; which they so *hazardously* make use of, to their own *Spiritual danger, detriment of the deserving Clergy, and Reproach of the whole profession, &c.*

And though what hath been already suggested, may with unbyass'd Judgments, suffice to evince the falseness and iniquity of their carriage, who pretend Idleness, Pride and Covetousness in the Clergy, to be the reasons for which they are moved to Contemn them: Yet we may

may safely suppose that those who are most active in bringing them into this Contempt, would be no otherwise, though they were as blameless therein, as the *Stars* and *Angels* to which they are compared; and in particular as innocent, as was once the man without a Navel. For where the Credit and Reverence of the Ministry is to be blasted, it is not what they are, but what Prejudice represents them to be. And besides all this, the *Contemners* know themselves herein to be safe; while they are not ignorant how the Fortitude of the Clergy is wholly passive, and that they are naked of all other Weapons but *Prayer* and *Patience*. And indeed what than *Lowliness* and *Meekness* can better become his Substitutes, who being reviled, reviled not again; and who injoyn'd his disciples in general to recompence Evil with Good, and Cursing with Blessing? So that these *Contemners* finding themselves out of danger not only of *Duel* and *Challenge*, but also of *Recrimination* and *Reviling*, they heroically manage their Province of *Disgrace* and *Contempt*: whetting their Tongues, like a Sword, and then wounding therewith by *Reproaches* those who will ne-

ver answer them at that *Weapon*. And indeed these Contemners, falling under the Clergies Christian consideration, will be found fitter Objects of their Pity than Anger; and more proper to be pray'd for than reproach't. And I doubt not but the Clergy do zealously pray for their *Contemners*, as their Great Master did for his Crucifiers — *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

C H A P. XIII.

A Survey of some of the Real Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy.

HAVING made this brief research into the more usual and troden pretences of the Contempt of our present Clergy, and found them to be but meer pretences, arising chiefly from Prejudice and *Mistake*; The next part of our Province is to enquire into such grounds of this Contempt, as seem more genuin and real. Not that I suppose any true reason can be render'd why the Clergy as such, should at all be condemn'd any more than

than God and Christ, who share with them in the Contempt: According to *St. Luke* 10. 16. &c. 1 *Thes.* 4. 8. But that the true grounds of this Contempt are not the Personal Lapses of the Clergy, as is pretended, but the *Nature*, and *Management* of their Function.

As to the Nature of their Function, it is well known to consist in turning Men from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God; and to teach all those, who profess Christianity, to deny all Ungodliness and Worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously and Godly all the time of their being here on Earth. And as to the management of those things wherein the Nature of the Ministry consists, it ought to be zealous and impartial; for as the Clergy are the Stewards of the Divine Mysteries, they are by that Title obliged to be *faithful*, which they cannot pretend to be, should they cry peace, peace, to those whom they see in open Hostility against the *Prince of Peace*. But their Carriage must be like *Balaam's*, whom though a false Prophet, a houseful of Gold and Silver could not have hired to go one step beyond the Command of the Lord.

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Now when the present Clergy shall pursue the Duties of their *Calling* with that Integrity and Faithfulness which God requires at their Hands, ill-governed Men usually deal with them, as *Ahab* did with the Prophet, who with a Boldness and Fidelity becoming a Prophet, and a Subject, foretold the great Disasters should befall him for his wicked Conversation. We Read of *Herod's* listening to the austere Baptist (and of the many good things he did at his Exhortation) and how he had him in no small Veneration, till he told him of his incestuous Association with his Brothers Wife. And *St. Paul* met with no interruption in his Discourse, till he came to a close reasoning of *Continence* before him, who lived in unlawful *Concubinage*. And long before this too, we find a Friendly and Pious Advice turned to the Reproach of him that gave it. As in the case of *Lot*, whom the filthy *Sodomites* accused of Arrogance because he meekly advised them to desist from that more than brutal Violence and Impurity, which they designed against his Angel-Guests. And it was the malicious Supposal of the *Jews*, that if respect was given to Christ's Person, it would so credit his Doctrine, that all would be in danger to believe it;

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it; and to prevent this, they sought to beat down his Reputation by calling him *Drunkard, Glutton, Mad-man, and Deceiver of the People.* And so unreasonable are Governing Lusts, and so charmed therewith are Men's Hearts, that those who by the Powerful Countercharm of God's Word are willing to disinchant them, are no better treated than Christ by the *Demoniack, who, when* he came to cure, cryed out, that he was come to torment him.

The Written like the Essential Word of God is quick and powerful (Vital and Operative) piercing even to the dividing of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joynts and Marrow, and able to discern the Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart. And when by this its Ministers rip up those Secret Corruptions, in whose Concealment and Fruition so many seem to have placed their Heaven and Felicity, it will be easy to foretel what great respect they are like to meet with, especially in an Age, in which most Offenders are of the same Humour with those *Beaux Esprits, or Virtuosi in Cicero, who were not vexed that they offended, but took it very hainously to be told thereof.* And when again by the same Gospel, which is a *light that makes all manifest,*
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the Clergy discover to the Consciences of the Wicked the Shame and Nakedness of their Vices; not being able to endure the Tortures naturally arising from such a Detection, nor to deny the Truth thereof, nor yet daring openly to Blaspheme the Instrument of the same Detection; their only refuge is to lessen both the Efficacy and Credit of the Gospel, by lessening the esteem of those who preach it: But too rightly apprehending that God's Word, and his Ministers are such near *Allies*, that the disrepute of the one falls upon the other.

Now, when the Clergy (according to their Duty) go about to cut the wings of *Pride*, or quench the Flames of Lust; to decry those sinful Courses, which corrupt Nature most magnifies, and to propagate those Vertues to which these Contemners have the greatest Antipathy and Averseness: When (in a word) the Clergy zealously recommend to our most Cordial Practice those very Duties, which we most dislike, they cannot hope by this way to procure any great esteem with those against whose Vices they thus directly set themselves. But on the contrary, they are to expect to be looked upon as the greatest Enemies by all such, to whom they thus tell
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the truth. And indeed it has ever been the Policy of the Malicious to lessen their Credit whose service they would render insuccessful, and to make Men have mean thoughts of all those, who interrupt them in their Vices. But without driving this particular any further, it is undeniably evident to the World, that one main cause of the Clergies Contempt may be resolved into that Apology Christ upon the same occasion made for himself, *viz. The World hateth me, because I testifie that the Works thereof are evil.*

Nor doth that part of the Priestly Function, consisting in the instruction of all Men in their respective Duties, occasion some of them more obloquy, than the Execution of the Sacred Discipline doth others. For this latter having a direct aim and tendency to suppress our darling Sins, and to put us to shame for their Commission; we labour to beat it down with the same Engine, that those *Conspirators* in *Numb. 16th* used against the Priesthood, namely, as a thing useless and unnecessary: They indeed did so, upon the pretence of their own Sanctity; but we do it out of Pride, Contumacy, and Stubborness.

I know alas! the *Power of the Keys*, Excommunication, or Church-Censures,
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are become very contemptible, and sunk so low in some Men's Opinion, that they fear them no more than Artificial Fire or meer noisy Thunder. But yet in their Original Institution and Primitive Practice nothing was more high and dreadful, and it was look'd upon as a great Mercy in God, and a singular Honour for the Clergy, to confer upon them *no less a Power than* to deliver obstinate sinners over unto the Power of Satan, and by a previous Judgment to his to Sentence them to the Everlasting Pains of Hell: And likewise, a Power to release penitent Souls from the Chains of Darknes, and Bondage of the Devil, and to restore them to the Glorious Liberty of the Sons of God; whereby they are made *Heirs* of the Kingdom of Heaven. And yet this Power, whereof Angels would be ambitious, Christ confer'd upon the Clergy, when he said unto his Apostles, *Whose soever Sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whose soever Sins ye retain they are retained.* And as these Words give a Power of Publick exclusion out of the Church for *Scandalous Enormities*, and readmission into it upon *Repentance*, it undoubtedly belongs to the Governors of the Church, as distinguished from the People

as is Evident from the first Collation of it in St. *John* 20. 22. And the Exercise of these Censures is so much the work of Church-Governors, that St. *Paul* calls them the Weapons of their Spiritual Warfare, by which they cast down imaginations and every high thing, that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bring into Captivity every thought to the Obedience of Christ, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. And this Power in the first Exercise of it was attended with signal Severities, such as this Age will hardly be induced to believe; and that too when there was no Temporal Sword to assist these *Spiritual Weapons*. But it is not easie to advise what ought to be done in such a State of the Church as ours is, wherein the Enormities of some give them a sort of impunity, who having separated themselves from the Church, are also in their own esteem at least, got out of the Power of its Censures. And as to many of those, who stay within the Church, through a long forbearance of this Rod, they are grown too *Heady* to be brought under Correction. And both Principles of *Latitude*, and a long *Uncorrected Wickedness* are ready to dispute all Ecclesiastical Restraints, and
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would rather have no Church at all, than one with *Censures*. But as this doth no way evacuate the *Power*, so neither should it hinder the Exercise of it, but it ought rather to be the more vigorously asserted, because thus unjustly gain-said. However it will not become such as are chiefly concern'd in the management of the Church-censures, by a luke-warm Execution thereof to suffer them to be looked upon as meer *Bruta fulmina*, and not such proper Remedies to cure the Scandals of Christianity, as they are pretended to be. And if Religion could but get such countenance us by a prudent, and Impartial management of Church-Censures, to strike the open Sinners with fear of being turn'd out of *Christian Company*, and to be avoided as unfit for Conversation; if not Conscience yet *Reputation* would in a great measure restrain them. Not to be thought *Fit Company for Christians*, would surely make them shun their Vices; and very *Shame*, one designed effect of the Censures, would prevail upon these, by whom, nobler Motives are Contemn'd. We need not be told how the Censures of the Church were *not only laid aside in the Vastations* of the Arian Heresie and Persecution; and before that in *Dioclesians* days, against the *Lapsi*: But we find that things were

were come to that extremity in one Church of St. Paul's planting that he was reduced to his (ὄφελον καὶ ἀποκοφόνται) would they were even cut off that trouble u, Gal. 5. 12. The Offenders were grown so Numerous and Obstinate, that they seemed too Mighty for him: So that he was only able to *Excommunicate* the guilty in a *Wisb*, and cut them off *Desire*. And much of the same disorder seems to be spread though our own Age; for though the necessity of the times, interest of Religion, and welfare of the Church, loudly call for the severities of *Discipline*; yet there appear no small Discouragements against whether we consider the Popularity of Vices, or the Power and Greatness of the Vitious: Especially when we see that they whose *Lives* and *Judgments* are chiefly to be cured with the Censures, have either had the Reins so long upon their Necks, that they are grown too Head-strong for *Discipline*; or they have adopted such *Principles*, as make them Scorn, and despise it, and so cause them to withstand both Christ and his Church. And in this profligate State of Affairs, chiefly occasion'd by the late and long overthrow of Government and *Discipline*, it

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is no easie matter for Church-Rulers to proceed. However we ought to be so far from Contemning them upon this score, that it is our bounden Duty humbly to bow our Knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would direct and strengthen the *Reverend Fathers of Our Church*, that they may support and keep up the small remainder of that Ecclesiastick Discipline, which *Schism*, *Atheism* and *Profaneness*, have not yet quite trampled under Foot. And that by their paternal Endeavours the whole Discipline may in some good measure be restored to its primitive Efficacy and Credit, and so be able to accomplish the Ends for which it was at first designed.

C H A P. XIV.

A further Examination of the Grounds of the Contempt of the Clergy, respecting their Condition in the World, and Extraction.

ANother occasion of the Clergies Contempt may be imputed to the indiscreet Measuring of their Credit according to their outward Fortunes, which generally being but small, their Veneration is proportionate. For men deal herein with the Ministers of the Gospel, as the scoffing *Jews* dealt with *his Blessed Author*, when they judged of him according to secular Circumstances, and weighed him in the false Ballance of the World. *Is not this the Carpenters Son? And they were offended at him.* Their Probe pierced no deeper than the skin, and their judgment of *Christ* being only according to the outward appearance of his Person, it could not be righteous, They saw the *Messias* to be destitute of external *Royalty* and *Grandeur*; that his Administration was not *Lordly* or attended

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attended with state but Humble and perswasive; and his Carriage not Big and *Haughty*, but *Meek* and *Lowly*; and that he wanted that exterior Splendid appearance wherein they expected him: And which the blind world doth still esteem only worthy Admiration and Regard. And it was upon these terms that they rejected the *Lord of Life*, and preferred one who Murdered, before one who came to Save them. And the condition of present Circumstances makes the parallel exact. For we find the same Objections brought by some to Vilify the Clergy, which were urged against Christ. *viz.* Meanness of parentage, and estate, which some delight to object against the Clergy with the utmost malice, and Contempt. But as to this there needs no Apology, for the Clergy, while there are other things which Enoble besides *Family*. For among wise Persons *Learning* was ever thought a sufficient Title to Nobles, and Secular Eminence. And *A. Gellius* affirms, that not only excellency of Extraction and great Fortunes, but also *Learning* makes *Noble*. For coming (saith he) to visit *Fronto Cornelius*, as he was lying sick of the Gout, I found him lying upon his *Scimpodium Graciense*, *circum-*
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undique sedentibus multis Doctrina, aut Genere, aut Fortuna Nobilibus viris. And the Lawyers affirm expressely, that if a Legacy be given *Pauperi Nobili*, the *Executors* may give it to a Doctor. And the respect given to Letters, hath occasion'd the dispute for Precedency between Knights and Doctors of the Law, as may appear both by the Comparison that *Tully* maketh betwixt *Lucius Murena* a Knight of Rome, and *Pub. Sulpitius* a Lawyer (each of them standing for the Consulship) in his Eloquent Oration for Murena, and many other Disputes arguing the Case to and fro. And in foreign Countries where the Civil Law is in Credit, it is still disputable; though this precedence is not so Dubitable among us, where the professors of the Civil Law are shut up (said Doctor *Ridley*) into a narrow corner of their Profession. I produce this, only to show that Learning and the degrees of the Schools (which are still supposed to be in the Clergy) have ever been thought as fair Titles to the advantage of *Secular Opinion* and *Honour*, as any other. But as for such as would lessen the Priesthood for the meanness of their *Descent* who bear it, they would do well to

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consider, that the Laws of the Land render a *Fils des prestres*, or Baseborn, *uncapable of that Sacred Office*, unless by the interposition of the Royal Prerogative. And that in the Ancient qualifications of those who were to be admitted to Holy Orders, all Bondmen, Accomptants, and Men distorted or deform'd in Body, as also *Bigamists*, were excluded. But never mean extraction, as appears from *Can. Apost. LXXXII.* and *Can. XXXIII. Conc. Sext. Trull.* Next, that in all Orders of Men it is the *Office*, Authority and Calling, that are chiefly to be looked upon. In respect of all which the Clergy are undeniably as considerable as any Rank of Men whatsoever. And lastly, that *Learning* and *Manners*, are chiefly required for admission into Holy Orders. It is true, that eminence of *Birth* gives no small Lustre to the Clergy, and when *Persons of Quality* enter upon the Priesthood, they become as greater Stars, which Brighten up the *less*. And though Birth and *Descent*, &c. be inconsiderable in respect of God, yet *Vertue*, Learning and Religion are rendred more Illustrious when therewith accompanied. And though likewise the Sacerdotal Office be in itself, and alone, sufficient to give Credit and

and Repute to the lowest Descent of Men, who duly undertake and discharge it: Yet it is no little Honour and Felicity for the Church, not only to have Kings for her Nursing-Fathers, but also Nobles for her Priests. But yet still none are either *too High* or *too Low* for Holy Orders, whose *Graces* and *Abilities* qualify to undertake *them*. And albeit those are more to be Honor'd, who besides *Vertue* and *Learning* bring into the Clergy Eminence of Parentage, yet those are not to be contemn'd who come without it. There being enough in the very Nature and Original of the Office, to procure them respect and reverence who bear it. Whom according in *St. Paul*, we are to esteem very highly to Love for *their works sake*: Or, to pay them all possible respect for the Pains that they take amongst us. *1 Thes. 4. 12, 13.*

But if to what has been already spoken, all the real grounds of this *Contempt* be not reducible; then what is wanting may be too justly resolved into the decay of Reverence to Religion and Obedience to God. And now it is not *Vertue*, *Piety*, *Learning*, *Industry*, *Justice*, *Liberality*, nor all that can be imagin'd to fit the Clergy for respect, that can procure it them with those

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who have thrown off all *Loyalty to God* and *Reverence to Religion*. Against whom it is in vain otherwise to Apologize, than with *Tears*, and *Prayers*.

But there are yet two things more, which (in regard of present Circumstances) are accessory to the Contempt we speak of. The first is the carriage of *Dissenting Teachers*, who by ungentle Arts labour to lessen the Esteem, and therewith the Serviceableness of the *Universities*, and Orthodox, Clergy. Who contrary to their Pretences of greater Conscientiousness, blow into the Heads of their *Unwary Sectaries*, that all but themselves are a Ministry so Monstrous as would affright you to mention. And indeed the infusing their Profelytes with spiteful and uncharitable Prejudices against the Regular Clergy is one main Engine wherewith they so closely insinuate themselves into *Their Affections*, with whom the strength of their own Credit chiefly consists in weakening that of the ministers of the Church. The guilt and injustice of which Carriage is so open to the *World*, that there is no need further to Animadvert upon it. [And though methinks better things might be expected from Men, who pretend to make such Conscience

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of *Their Wayes*; yet I could wish that only Dissenters were herein to be faulted: And that *among the Conforming Clergy themselves*, none were to be met with, to encrease the cry, and speak evil of the things they understand not. Which certainly is their unhappiness who either by their own Opinions, or by squint Reflections upon those of others, occasion many to grow Jealous that all the *Conforming Clergy* are not so Orthodox, as we believe. Which Carriage is so foully detogatory to this Sacred Rule they profess, and so greatly tending to the contempt of their order, and therefore so unpolitick as well as Uncharistian, that its strange any Priest should be guilty of it, who is either truly *Pious* or *Considerate*. And if any who reading this Intimation, by reason of their own Conscioufness shall take it to themselves, I humbly pray God it may turn to their amendment.

Another sort of Men, who egregiously promote this Contempt, are the Roman Missionaries, who though not so solicitous as the former to bespatter the Persons of our Clergy, yet what is more for their purpose, they labour to make void their Orders (and thereby their whole Service) by instilling into their
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ease Profelytes a belief, That ever since our departure from *Rome*, we have been without an *Ephod*. and without *Teraphim* : All Priesthood properly so called. And though this perhaps may neither be practised upon *Vulgar Persons*, nor at all come within their Cognizance, yet it is more than probable that they deal and succeed herein with those, who are able to bring most damage to our Church, and advantage to their own.

And thus having with that plainness and brevity, which was at first design'd, given you an Essay both of the *Real* and *Pretended Grounds* of the Contempt of the Clergy ; I have as it were only described the *Disease*, so that it should be our next Task to prescribe somethings in order to its Cure. And though according to present Circumstances, this may seem to passe for next to impossible ; yet it is to be hop'd that it would not a little contribute to mitigate and allay the Fury of the *Distemper*, if both *Laity* and Clergy would seriously lay to heart what has, I hope, with *Modesty* and *Conscience*, *Truth* and *Integrtly* been already mention'd. And what I have now to speak more upon this *Unwelcome Subject*,

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ject, shall be by way of a very *short* Address unto three sorts of Persons, who are herein more especially concern'd.

And my first address shall be to the Magistrate, that he would not suffer the Clergy to be condemn'd, if not for the sake of their Function, yet for the *Peace* and *Safety* of the *State*. For if upon an Atheistical supposal it should be granted, That Religion is but a meer Engine of Government, or a Politick Invention, devised to awe the People into Subjection and Obedience, and thereby very proper to turn the affairs of the World: Yet that Religion may be able to effect these purposes, there is a necessity of distinct Persons to instil into the People a belief and fear of the *Invisible Powers*, and this dismal apprehension of a future State, or the World to come. And to show them how that these invisible Powers have decreed and appointed that all sorts of Persons should be subject to the visible higher Powers upon Earth; and how that they will certainly and fearfully punish all such as do otherwise. So that it now becomes the interest of the Magistrate to assert the Credit and Authority of those, upon whose Ministry

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Ministry so much of the common Welfare depends. And to take care that Persons thus imployed, have such a Veneration and Regard shown them, as may render them competent to perform these good Offices for the State. If the honoring of Religion brings *Greatness*, and the vilifying thereof Ruin, to a Nation; and that Religion cannot be honor'd, where its Ministers are despis'd: Then let those who bear any tolerable *Good-will* unto the Land of their Nativity, take heed of making but a Mock of that Carriage, which may prove no less fatal to its Happiness, than it did to the *Jews*; in whom God punished the Abuse of his Messengers with the *Desolation* of their Temple, and *irreversible Dispersion* of their whole *Nation*.

When Princes granted to Clergy-Men Authority to hold *Consistories*, it was because they thought it uncomly for them *to follow matters of Suits abroad*, to the great distraction of their Prayer and Exercise of Divine Service. As also that they might have a more speedy and better dispatch before a *Judge* of their own Learning, than before a Judge of another Profession. And that their Suits and Quarrels should not be divulged and spread abroad among the Lay-people,

ple, to the great Discredit of their whole Calling. And we read that in Criminal Matters, Princes anciently so much tender'd the Clergy, that if any Man among them had Committed any thing worthy of Death or open Shame, he was not Executed or put to publick Disgrace, *before he was Degraded by the Bishop, and his Clergy*; and so was Executed, and put to Shame, not as a Clerk, but as a Lay-Malefactor. Which respect towards Ecclesiastical Men, 'twere well it were still retain'd, both because (*saith a Great Civilian*) the Consideration thereof is reverent and worthy the Dignity of the Ministry, whose Office is most Honorable; and also for that it is more Ancient than any *Papistical Immunity*; and let me add also, because it highly tends to the Honour and Advancement of Religion, and consequently to the strength and safety of the Common-wealth.

And though instead of bearing any such Reverence to God's Ministers, the present Age seems to reckon it among its *Wonderful Accomplishments* to contemn *Them*; yet if ever the sad Effects thereof fall under the mature and serious Consideration of the Magistrate, I doubt not but the sense of his own and the

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the Publick Safety, will awaken his Endeavours to set Shores to that Inundation of Miseries, which from an uncontrolled Vilifying of the Officers of Religion will naturally flow, and unavoidably break in upon, and deluge the Land.

My next Address is to the *Contemners themselves*: Whom I would heartily request to Consider, how their Vilifying the Clergy, is contrary to the general Practice of the World: There being no Nation so utterly Savage and Uncivilized, whose respect to their Priests doth not rather incline to excess, than Defect. Next I would Humbly Beseech them to revolve how their Carriage herein is wholly Opposit to that Common Equity, which obligeth us to yield *All* respect agreeable to the Estimate the *Laws* of the *Place* have put upon the *Office* they bear. And here I cannot but likewise Suggest who those are, whom they Contemn; how that in every *Spermologus*, or idle, babling, talkative Clergy-Man, (for so the *Wits* of *Athens* called *St. Paul*) *there is an Ambassador of Christ.* 2 Cor. 5. 20. And all know an Ambassador sustains his Princes Person, and negotiates his Affairs. And that the King is said, in our usual

usual Discourse, to do that, that his Ambassador doth in his Name. And the Respect or Affront done to an Ambassador, interpretatively is done to the Person, whom he Represents. Which is all applicable to the Ambassadors of Christ, for what *They* do, *He* is said to do; and the Dishonour done to them, God takes as done to Himself (1 Sam. 8. 7. *They have not Rejected you, but they have Rejected me*) and our Saviour told his Disciples, when He Commission'd them to Preach in his Name, *He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me*, Mat. 10. 40. *He therefore that despiseth them, despiseth not Men, but God.* 1 Thes. 4. 8. According to that usual saying among the Jews, *Every Mans Messenger is as himself.* And give me leave to tell you (who are the Contemners of Christ's Ambassadors) that they are *more deserving of your Respect than Those of Earthly Princes*, as representing a Master, whose Power and Greatness, as much excel that of Secular Kings, as God doth all the Sons of Men. For they are the Ambassadors of the Lord of Hosts. Mal. 2. 7.

They are likewise intrusted with greater Secrets than those of State, even with the Great Mystery of Godliness, God manifest
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in the Flesh, which had been hid from all Ages, and which the Angels desired to look into. They likewise were not, as other Ambassadors are, sent to particular Nations, and upon particular Concerns; but unto all the *World*: And upon a Message of no less Importance than to make up the grand Breach, and to Reconcile God and Man. And we may still observe that they have no other Design upon us, than to open our Eyes, and to turn us from *Darkness to Light*, and from the Power of Satan to God. That we may receive *Forgiveness of Sins*, and *Inheritance among them that are Sanctified by Faith, that is in Christ*. And seeing that this is the undoubted Tenour of the Commission they receive for their Ambassy, and that they Negotiate nothing but the Welfare and Happiness even of their *Contemners*, which one would hope might move them to retract their Contempt upon the sole account of its *Injustice* and *Disingenuity*. For what can more deservedly bear that Imputation, than to deal ill with those, who wish us no worse than to be Eternally Happy: And who with the same Devotion and Integrity endeavour our *Salvation* as they do their own? Indeed if they went about to A-
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bridge us of any *Honest* Comfort or Delight; or of what is either agreeable to our *Rational* Nature, or soberly conducing to Healthful and Comfortable Life: If they Instructed us to cast our Wealth into the Sea, when there are other ways enough to save us from being drown'd: If they forbid us any thing but what will do us Hurt; or enjoyn'd us any thing but the Practise of those Vertues which have ever been justly accounted the best *Tryals* and *Exercises* of *Brave* and *Generous Spirits*; and fittest to keep Men from Sinking into *Bruits*: Then we might have some Colour to Invert the Scripture, and to revile them for their *Works* like. But being clearly Ascertain'd of the contrary; and that they manage their Office according to its genuine Design, *namely*, to save their own Souls, and the Souls of them that hear them: We cannot without the Privilege of *Lunacy*, and Scandal of *Ingratitude*, either Expose their Persons, or vilify their Function. As for mine own part, it has ever hitherto exercised my Wonder, that Men should run so far counter both to God and themselves, to Despise those whom God will honour; and Undervalue those who are

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so serviceable to them in their highest Concern, and principal Interest.

But leaving these Men to cure this their distemper'd Carriage towards the Clergy, with a considerate Reflection upon the baseness and ungentility of so doing; I will conclude these *Tumultuary Papers*, with a short Application to those Reverend Persons, to the Vindication of whose *Honour* they are really intended.

And here I would not be thought to be one of those who are *Wiser* than their Teachers; an Imputation not possibly to be avoided, if I should go about to instruct them. My purpose therefore is in this place to perform the Office of an humble Remembrancer; and to mind those Reverend Persons, (to whom in all Submission I make this Address) as far as possible, and it in them lyes, to give no occasion to their *Enemies to speak evil of them*. And though I know you have no Locks upon their Hearts, nor Bits in their Mouths, but that their Thoughts are free, and their Tongues are their own; yet you want not ways conducing to their *Restraint*, and to silence the Obloquy of such unreasonable Men: *Namely,*

First,

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First, A prudent Care that no Egregious Misgovernment of your Persons render your Calling less acceptable; but labouring that in all things your *Holy Office* may be adorn'd with an answerable Conversation. For 'it is the well governing of our selves that will Embolden you in the Reproof of others Miscarriages, and give Authority to your Doctrine. And by doing the same things you Teach, you shall give an undeniable Attestation that they are not so difficult in themselves, nor humane Nature so far weakned and depressed, but that all the Duties of Christianity may be performed. But if like Mercurial Statues, you never move a Foot toward the place to which you direct others; this may create in the *Laity* a sturdy Suspicion, that the whole matter is but a Holy Cheat. Let your own Breasts then be the first *Profelytes* of your Doctrine; and let your Ministry first manifest its Power in making your selves good. *Non aliter viventes quàm vivendum præcipientes*: Which was neglected by those Philosophers, who (saith *Seneca*) deserved so ill of Mankind. Always remembering how ill it becomes Divines to be like those Philosophers in *Epictetus*, who were Ἄνευ τῆ

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περί τειν, μένει τὸ λέγειν, *Factis procul,
Verbis Tenuis*; as *A. Gellius* makes the Re-
mark. *Lib. 17. Chap. 19.*

Chaucer in the Prologue, to his *Canterbury Tales*, gives the Character of a Religious and Learned Priest. Which being not wholly Impertinent to that we speak of, I have here inserted in his own Language and Metre.

The Parson.

A good manne there was of Reli-
gion,
And was a poore parson of a Town:
But rich he was of holy thought and
werke,
He was eke a learned manne and a
Clerke,
That Christes Gospels truly would
preach;
His parishners devoutly would he
teach.
Benigne he was and wonder dis-
ligent,
And in aduersitie full patient;
And soch a one he was proved oft
tithes,
Full loth were him to curse for his
tithes;

But

But rather would he yeven out of
doubt

Wnto his poore Parishners all a-
bout,

Both of his offring and of his Sub-
stance;

He couthe in little thing have suffi-
saunce.

Wide was his Parish and Houses fer
asonder,

But he ne left netther for raine ne
thonder,

In sicknesse ne in mischiese for to vi-
site,

The ferdest in his Parish, moch oz
lite,

Wpon his feeke, and in his hand a
stake :

This noble example to his shepe he
yafe.

That first he wzought, and after-
ward taught,

Out of the Gospel he the words
caught,

And this figure he added eke thereto,

That if Gold rust, what should Iron do ?

For yef a Priest be foul, on whom
we trust,

No wonder is a † leude man to rust ; † i. e.

And shame it is, if a Priest take A Lay-
kepe, man,

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To se a bitten shepperd, and a
clean shepe :

Well ought a p̄test, ensample for to
ye be,

By his cleanness, how his shepe
should liue.

He set not his Benefice to hire,
And let his shepe acomber in the
mire,

And renne to London, to Saint
Poules,

To seeken him a Chauntrie for
soules :

Oz with a Brotherhede to be with-
old :

But keep at home and kept well
his fold,

So that the wolfe made him not
miscarry,

He was a shepherd and not merce-
nary.

And though he holy were, and ver-
tuous,

He was not to sinful men despi-
tous,

He of his speech dangerous ne
digne,

But in his teaching discrete and be-
nigne,

To drawne folk to heauen, with
fairnesse,

By

By good ensample, this was his be-
finesse.

But he were any persone obstinate,
Whether he were of high or low es-
tate,

Him would he scribbe sharply for the
Pontis,

A better Priest I know no where
non is.

He wayted after no pompe ne reber-
ence,

He maketh him no spiced Conscience;
But Christles lore, and his Apostles
twelbe,

He taught, but first he followed it
himselfe.

And though the excellent *Chaucer*,
as appears by his writings, met not
with many of this Character; yet the
History of those Times represents the
Religiousness of the Clergy (*especially the
Regular*) and the peoples Reverence
towards them to have been highly com-
mendable. And that the Clergy serv-
ed God in continual prayer, watching,
fasting, and preaching the word of
life; despising the Commodities of the
World, as things that were none of their
own; being content with so much there-

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of as might serve their necessities ; living themselves according to what they taught others. For which the people had them in a marvellous Reverence, freely imparting to them of the chief of their Substance. And in so doing conform'd to the primitive Rule and Practice of Christianity.

It was *St. Paul's* Exhortation to *Timothy*, that he *Should take heed to himself and to his Doctrine* : And the former advice seems to have been equally necessary and important with the latter. For the loose and ill-govern'd Life of a Divine doth usually more hurt, than his Preaching doth good : There being nothing doth more effectually imprint the *Lessons* of Holiness and Vertue upon the people, than the exemplary Conversation of their Teachers : The later having ever had a greater force upon *The*, *Many* than the Former. And indeed it was the signal care of the Apostles *To live as they preached*, that at first made Christian Religion so successful and prevailing in the World. And none could reasonably doubt of the Truth of that Doctrine, and necessity of those duties, in whose conscientious belief and performance, the Preachers thereof were such *Fair Examples*. Remember what Christ said to
your

your Holy Predecessors, when he was training them up for the Ministry : “ Ye
“ *are the Salt of the Earth* ; but if the Salt
“ hath lost its flavour, wherewith shall
“ it be salted ? It is thenceforth good
“ for nothing, but to be cast out, and
“ to be trodden under Foot of Men.
“ *Mat. 5. 13.*

The position of the *Syriack* Scholiast translated out of the *Syriack* Language by *D. L.* hath these words upon *Levit. 4. 3.* “ If the Priest that is anointed, &c.
“ In the *Greek*, if the high-Priest, he who
“ is anointed, shall sin, *so as to make the*
“ *people to sin (i. e.)* they imitating him,
“ and offending in the same kind, the
“ whole Congregation shall offer an
“ Oblation, a young Bullock for his sin.
“ *i. e.* All the people when they offend
“ offer the same Oblation only, which
“ the Priest did when he offended.
“ And therefore it is said, that the transgression of him who standeth in an
“ high place, ought to be reputed, as if it
“ were the sin of all those who stand under him.

“ And if a Ruler shall sin, his Oblation is less than that of the Priest, or
“ that of the Congregation all together ;
“ Nor was he sprinkled with Blood seven times, by reason of his Prerogative
“ tive

" tive of Honour; and though in some
 " respects the Prince himself be less than
 " the Priest, and the people do far ex-
 " ceed him in Number; yet he is greater
 " than any one of the Congregation,
 " and therefore every one of them of-
 " fending offereth a *Female*, but he a
 " *Male-kid*, *Levit.* 4. 22, 23, 24.
 The design of inserting this position
 will not need to incur the mark of
Impertinency, when it is considered to
 whom upon this occasion it is address-
 fed.

And as that which I have now rudely
 suggested, will prove one infallible me-
 thod to secure your Esteem; so it will
 likewise furnish you with courage in the
 discharge of your Function. For no-
 thing doth so much animate the reproof
 of anothers faults, as a *Nil conscire* in
 the Reprover. And seeing it is your
 unhappiness to live in an Age, wherein
 Vice is arrived at that *Assurance* and
 Power, that it may seem no small piece
 of Valour to be Vertuous your selves,
 or to Counsel others to be so; there ap-
 pears all imaginable reason that courage
 draws you out to assault and batter the
 strong holds of sin, and to conflict wick-
 edness in High Places. And when your
 Courage

Courage is the Child of your own Innocency, it will infuse a marvellous vigor and spirit into every Branch of your Office, *So that you may speak and exhort, and rebuke with all Authority.* And present Circumstances being duly weighed, your Case will plainly appear to resemble that of *Ezekiels*, when God said unto him, *Ezek. 2. 6.*

Son of Man, be not afraid of them, *neither be afraid of their words*, though Briars and Thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among Scorpions, be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be *Rebellious, &c.*

Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their forehead, *&c. Chap. 3. 8, &c.*

And give me leave to shut up all with commending to your Consideration, the sharp and known invective of that excellent Heathen against the vicious Philosophers, in the second Book of his *Tusculan Questions*. *Quotas quisque Philosophorum invenitur, qui sit ita moratus, &c. Artemque Vitæ professus delinquit in vita, &c.* He is like a professed *Grammarian* speaking barbarously,

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barbarously, or a scurvey Singer vaunting of his skill in Musick. Nothing being more absurd and ridiculous than to be defective in the knowledge of that in which a Man professeth himself to be a Master, &c.

Ad majorem Dei Gloriam.

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F I N I S

THE
Sacerdotal Benediction.

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd at

O U N D L E,

AT A
V I S I T A T I O N,

A P R I L 14. 1619.

By *SAMUEL GIBSON*, Minister, at
Burleigh, in Rutland.

D E U T. X. 18.

*The Lord separated the Tribe of Levi, to bear the
Arke of the Covenant of the Lord, to stand be-
fore the Lord, to Minister unto him, and to Bless
in his Name.*

L O N D O N:

Printed for W. TAYLOR, at the Ship, in
St. Paul's Church - Yard. 1709.

Sacredotal Benediction.

SERMON

ON



VISION

April 14 1819

By SAMUEL JOHNSON, M.D.

DEUT. x. 17.

The text of the sermon is printed in the following order:—
I. The Commandment which is the subject of the vision.
II. The vision itself, as it appears in the mind of the seer.
III. The application of the vision to the state of the church and world.
IV. The conclusion, or exhortation to the fulfilment of the commandment.

LONDON: Printed by J. JOHNSON, in Pall-mall.

1819.

THE
Sacerdotal Benediction.

A
 S E R M O N
 OF THE

Power and Prerogative belonging to
 the Publick Ministers to BLESS
 the People: Preached by Samuel
 Gibson, at a Visitation at Oundle,
 April 14. 1619.

2 CHRON. xxx. 27.

Then the Priest and the Levites arose, The Text.
and Blessed the People, and their
Voice was heard, and their Prayer
came up to his Holy dwelling Place,
even unto Heaven.

HERE is the happy Ending of a The Com-
 good Meeting. text. The Meeting
 was, to Celebrate the Passover
 the Sacrament of the Law: The mo-
 tion

Sacerdotal Benediction.

tion hereunto was, made by good *Hezekiah*: Upon the motion, a very great Congregation of well-disposed people came together to *Jerusalem* to keep the Feast; and as that vertuous and religious King ordered the matter in his great Zeal for the Glory of God, so was it performed with that Solemnity, as the like was never done before since *Salomon's* Days: *A diviso regno non fuit Celebrata tanta festivitas junctis cum Jehuda Israelitis*: Never since the division of the Tribes, was there such a Festival time so solemnly kept by *Judah* and *Israel* together.

Now, to see the Zeal and Forwardness of the Princes and People in so good an Action, it was no small comfort to the Priests and Levites: They therefore, when they saw all things done to their own Hearts desire, and to the Glory of God, according to their own Office, in the end they gave the Assembly their *Priest Benediction*, and obtained a Blessing from the Lord upon them, and so dismiss the Congregation.

The words may be divided into two parts: The first is concerning the Priests Blessing upon earth: The second touching the Blessing of this Blessing, from Heaven. The first, in these words, *Then the Priests*

The division.

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Priests the Levites arose and Blessed the People, and their Voice was heard. The Second, in the words following; And their Prayer came up to his Holy Dwelling Place, even to Heaven. In the first part, every word hath his weight, and there are six Particulars observable therein. First, the Time when this was done. Secondly, the Agents by whom it was done. Thirdly, the Preparation thereunto. Fourthly, the Action it self. Fifthly, the Object of the Action. Sixthly and Lastly, the Manner of it.

First, for the Time, *Then*: That is, *Finito sacro*, All the Solemnity of the Sacrifice being finished, *Euxaistus*, seasonably and opportunely. In conclusion of that Divine Service, when the People were to depart, they were dismissed with a Blessing.

Secondly, for the Agents or Persons Blessing, they were Consecrate Persons which had a Calling to doe it: *The Priests the Levites Blest.*

The Priests were Men immediately called out of *Aaron's* Posterity, and Anointed in the sight of the People, among whom some that were Heads of their Families, were called Chief Priests, and the Princes of the Sanctuary, amongst whom there was one Super-Eminent

L

nent

nent Person above all the rest, called the High-Priest, who had most Glorious Attire, and might alone enter into the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, once a Year, and was in his Function a Figure of Christ.

The Levites were inferiour Ministers, and had Offices, appointed unto them under the Priests, as assistants unto them in the Service of the Tabernacle, *Numb. 8. 7. 19.* And this is the Difference between the Priests and the Levities, bnt here it is not said, the Priests and Levites, but *Haccohanim Halevijim*, as it is in the Hebrew Text, *Sacerdotes Levitici*, as *Junius* Translateth, the Levitical Priests. For *Aaron* and all the Priests were of the Tribe of *Levi*, and to them it pertained by the Law to Bless in the Name of God, *Numb. 6. 22.*

Thirdly, for the Preparation, *They arose.* Sitting still was not a Gesture reverend enough for them to use in publick Prayer: Kneeling down would have drowned their Voice and hindred the Audience; therefore it concerning the People to hear what they said, that they might say *Amen* to it, the Priests stood up that they might be Conspicuous, and so be the better understood of the Congregation.

Fourthly,

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Fourthly, for the Action, it is said, *They Bless.* To Bless, hath divers significations in the Scripture. First, Man is said to Bless God: Then it signifieth to Praise and give Thanks. Secondly, God is said to bless Man, and then it signifieth actually to confer some Good or other. Thirdly, Man is said to Bless Man, and then it signifieth to wish well unto, which is usually done with invocation of the Name of God, the Fountain of all Good that cometh to Man, or to any Creature in Heaven or earth. Now thus a Man blebeth either himself or others. To let pass the former, the Blessing of others pertaineth Either to all sorts in general, or to some more especially. To all sorts it belongeth, First partly by the Law of natural Affection: Secondly, partly by the Law of Courtesie: Thirdly, partly by the Law of Equitiy: Fourthly, partly by the Law of Charity.

First, by the Law of natural Affection it pertaineth to all sorts to Bless their Friends and Kindred: As the Friends of *Rebecca* did, when she was to depart from them, *Thou art our Sister, grow into thousand thousands; and*

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let thy Seed possess the gates of their Enemies, Gen. 24. 60. Thus children and all those that are not *Ægypti*, without natural Affection, will upon occasion often Pray, God Bless their Parents, and their Brethren and Sisters, and those which are neer unto them in Nature.

Secondly, by the Law of Courtesie it pertaineth to all sorts to Bless those whom they meet, or pass by. Which Courtesie we find to have been Reciprocal between Boaz and the Reapers, Ruth. 24. *The Lord be with you*, said Boaz. *The Lord Bless thee*, said the Reapers. And Psal. 129. 8. The words of the Prophet shew, that this was the ordinary Practice of the People. Whereupon St. *Augustine* on that place saith, *Nostis, fratres, &c.* Ye know (Brethren) when Men pass by those which are at Work, it is the custom to say to them, *Benedictio Domini supet vos*: The Blessing of the Lord be upon you. And this was more in use amongst the Jews: *Nemo transibat*, saith he: None passed by and saw any at Work in the Field, or Vineyard, or the like, but they did so. Nay, *Non licebat transire sine Benedictione*: It was not lawful for any to pass by, without this Blessing-Salutation.

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7

tation. It was against the Law of Courtessie to omit it.

Thirdly, by the Law of Equity it pertaineth to all sorts, in thankfulness to their Benefactors, and such as have been instruments of their Good, to Bless them: As *Boaz*, for the kindness shewed to *Ruth*, is Blessed, in these words; *Blessed be he of the Lord*, Ruth. 2. 20. Thus every good Subject will pray God *Bless the King*, under whom we live in Peace; every good Hearer will pray God Bless that Preacher, by whom his Soul is comforted; and every thankful Poor Man will pray God Bless his good Master, and save his Life, by whom he is relieved. This is the Recompence which the Rich have returned unto them from the Poor for their good Works and Almes, namely, their Blessing and Prayers to God for them, the forerunner of a greater and better recompence from the Lord; for *with such sacrifices God is pleased*, Heb. 13. 16.

Fourthly, by the Law of Charity it pertaineth to all sorts to Bless, even their Enemies, I mean their private Enemies. For to convicted Enemies of the Truth it is forbid, 2 *John*. 10.

Bid not an Antichristian Heretick and convicted false Teacher, God speed; but if they be only our personal Enemies, *Bless them that Curse you*, saith our Saviour, *Mat. 5. 44.*

Bless and Curse not, saith St. Paul, *Rom. 12. 14.* And this is not *consilium*, but *praeceptum*: Not an Evangelical Counsel, but a Moral Precept binding all Christians.

Thus by a four-fold Law it belongeth to all sorts to Bless: By the Law of natural Affection, by the Law of Courtesie, by the Law of Equity, and by the Law of Christian Charity. More especially it pertaineth to Superiours, to Bless those under their charge. These Superiours are either the chief in every Family, or more publick Persons. The Blessing that Pertaineth to the Chief in private Families, is either Domestical or Paternal. Domestical is that, which is done in the behalf of the whole Household: As it is said, that *David returned to Bless his house*, *1 Chronicles, 16. 43.* *Paternal Benediction* is that which is done by the Father to his Children or Childrens Children. This the Patriach did after a singular manner, having the Spirit of Prophecy, whereby they spake of things to come,

as

as they were moved by the holy Ghost. But other godly Parents have a special prerogative also in Blessing their Children: According to that of *Siracides*, *Benedictio patris firmat domos filiorum*: The Blessing of the Father establisheth the Houses of Children, but the Curse of the Mother rooteth out Foundations. There are fearful Stories recorded by good Writers, of the woful consequence of the Parents Curse upon the Children. Therefore it is said by the aforesaid Author, *Honour thy Father and Mother both in word and deed, that a Blessing may come upon thee from them.*

Now the blessing which belongeth to publick Persons, is either Political or Ecclesiastical. Political, when it is done by the Civil Magistrate, as it was by *Josuah*, when he called the *Reubenites* and the *Gadites*, and the half Tribe of *Manasses*, and commended them for their Obedience, and sent them home with his Blessing, as it is written, *So Joshua Blessed them and sent them away*; Josh. 22. 6.

The Ecclesiastical Blessing is that which appertaineth to the publick Ministers, of the Church, and is of all other the most effectual and availeable with God:

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And this is the Blessing spoken of in the Text, when it is said, *The Priests the Levites arose, and Blessed.* Now the object of this *Benediction* is either Personal, or Real. The real Object is not mentioned here, but omitted as a thing well known: For what they were to pray for in the behalf of the People, is set down, *Num. 6. 23. &c.* The Personal Object, is the People, that is, all the People, *Judah and Israel* assembled, to keep the Holy Feast, the Priests Blessed them all. Lastly, for the manner; it was with a lowd Voice: They spake out when they Blest them, praying Fervently for them, and Earnestly desiring the Blessing of God upon them all. This is signified in that it is said, *Their Voice was heard.* Yet not the Voice of the Priests only, but the Voices of the People also: All which are spoken of, as if there were but one Voice, in regard of the Harmony and Accord, all speaking to the same effect: Not that the People used the same words which the Priests used. But they did that which was their part to do, and said *Amen* to the Priest's Blessing, and that aloud, from their Hearts, wishing

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II

wishing themselves so Happy. Devotion amongst our People is now grown so Cold, that many times in great Congregations when the Blessing is pronounced, there is nothing but a little Whispering; few say *Amen*, and speak out at the End of Prayers. But in former times, when People were more Devout, they made such a Blessed Noise in the Church, when they said *Amen*, that St. *Jerome* likened it to the Thunder: and St. *Basil* to the roaring of the Sea; such a roaring and thundring Noise there was made by the Priests and People at this *Benediction*: *Their Voice was heard*. After this manner was the Blessing performed. And these are the Circumstances observable in the first part of the Text. In the second: First, Another Name is given to this Blessing: Secondly, Local Motion is ascribed unto it: Thirdly, The *terminus ad quem*, or Place whither it passed, is set down. For the First, the Name now given unto it, is *Prayer*, which sheweth how the Priests Blessed the People, not Vainly and Superstitiously, by casting of Holy Water upon them, or by Crossing with their Fingers, but by Prayer and Invocation of the Name of God for his Blessing

Sacerdotal Benediction.

sing upon them. For the Second, it is said, *tavo*, it went; which is spoken of Prayer Metaphorically. Alluding, as it seemeth to a Messenger, to which Prayer may be aptly compared: For *Veluti officio internuncii fungitur oratio pro nobis apud Deum*: Prayer doth the Office of a Messenger for us unto God. For the Third, the Place whither it went, hath two Names given unto it. First, his Holy Dwelling Place, or as it is in the *Hebrew*, the Habitation of his Holiness: Secondly, it is called Heaven. For the first, it importeth not that God had, or hath need of any Habitation, as a Man hath, of a House to dwell in, or that any Created Place whatsoever can contain the Transcendent Majesty of the Creator.

It is confest by *Salomon*, that *the Heavens, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him*, 1 Kings 8. 27. But it hath pleased him of his abundant Grace to condescend so far, as to have his *Cohabitations*, where he hath decreed to dwell, and to converse more Familiarly with his Creatures, and to communicate his Goodness unto them.

Our Saviour speaketh of his Fathers House, wherein there are *many Mansions*, that is, his Habitation, or rather Cohabitation

bitation above, where he doth Cohabit and familiarly Converſe with the Angels of Light; and on Earth he always had his Dwelling Places; before the coming of Chriſt, he had a material Temple, called his Houſe, where it pleaſed him to manifeſt his Preſence continually; and in every good Heart he dwelleth by his Holy Spirit.

Now according to the Adjunct or Appellation of Holineſs, the Lord his Dwelling Place is Holy, whatever Habitation he hath had, or hath, it was, and is Holy. The Temple Erected for him by *Salomon*, was Holy: And he never Dwelleth in any Heart, but that which is Sanctify'd: But to which Habitation of his Holineſs did this Prayer aſcend, the other Name putteth this out of doubt: For the Place whither it went, is alſo called Heaven.

Now Heaven is a common Name to divers Places and Spaces. *First*, According to the Scriptures there is *cælum elementare*, the Sublunary or Elementary Heaven, where the Winds blow, and the Birds fly, and the Clouds hang, and Comets and Meteors appear; that is not the Heaven here ſpoken of; their Prayer went up higher than ſo. *Secondly*, There is *cælum ſtellarum*, the Heavens

vens above, where the Sun, Moon and Stars run their course continually: Neither is the Heaven here meant; their Prayer went higher than the Stars. *Thirdly*, There is *cælum supremum*, the highest Heavens, sometimes called the third Heavens, sometimes *cælum cælorum*, the Heaven of Heavens, *sedes beatorum*, the place where the Blessed Angels live with their Creator in all Happiness. Thither went this Happy Messenger, the *Prayer of the Priests*. All this tendeth to set forth the singular acceptance which this *Sacerdotal Benediction* had with God: It penetrated the Clouds, and had speedy Passage thorough all Places, and present access unto the King of Glory. It had as happy Success, as *Esther* had, when she went to *Assuerus*: *And he held out his Golden Scepter unto her*, *Esther* 5. 2. And so it was both *oratio benedicens*, and *oratio benedicta*, a Blessing-Prayer, and a Blessed Prayer; for it drew a Blessing from the Lord upon his People.

But why is Heaven called his Holy Habitation, and not rather his Glorious Habitation, it being so Glorious a place as it is?

I answer, it may as well, and aptly, and upon as good Reason be called his Holy Habitation, as his Glorious Habitation. First, because of all other his Habitations, it is the most Holy, the true *Sanctum Sanctorum*, as Holy as Glorious. There is the Holy Trinity resident; there are the Holy Angels, and Saints; there is no impure Person, nor impure Action, but all perfect Purity and Sanctity. Secondly, however Carnal Men love Impurity and hate Holiness, Almighty God would have us to know that he is *Holy*, and that it is his Glory that he is so, and maketh all Places so where he Dwelleth, and all Persons whom he admitteth to dwell with him. And Thirdly, he would teach us all, not to Please our selves as the most do, with speaking or thinking of the Glory of Heaven only (which they that are Unholy in Heart and Life, shall never be the better for) but especially to take notice of the absolute and perfect Sanctity of that Happy Place: Knowing that as many Mansions as there are prepared there, yet there is no place for any that is a Despiser of Holiness, or of a defiled Heart and Conscience. So ye see, the Text being thoroughly Searched into and Opened,

pened, there is a World of Matter, and of good Matter too, not Impertinent to the present Audience, if a Man had time to Discourse of all Points arising from the Words: But *brevitas semper grata, aliquando necessaria*: As it is now when I should much forget my self, I should not remember those which had need to be Dismist, not only with *Benediction*, but with *Expedition*. I must therefore pass over many Things worthy the Handling, and insist only upon the Principal, as the time will give leave.

The main Theological Position grounded from the Text, is this, that it belongeth to the Publick Ministers of the Word, by a peculiar Prerogative, to Bless the People in the Name of the Lord; and there is special Power and Vertue in the *Prayers* and *Benedictions* which proceed out of their Mouths. Here the People were Blest. By whom? By the Priests. *The Priests the Levites Blest the People*. Not any of the Laity, not any of the Princes, not King *Hezekiah* though present; but the Levitical Priests, Church-Men, Ecclesiastical Persons, Masters of the Assembly, that had the managing of Divine Affairs at such times.

But

But were the People ever the better for the Blessing?

Yes, *their Prayer went up to Heaven*; this was intended in their Consecration and Separation. *The Lord separated the Tribe of Levi, to Minister unto him, and to Bless in his Name, Deut. 10. 8. and Numb. 6. 22.* there is the Ordinance of God touching the same: The Priests the Sons of *Aaron* are called of God to this Office, and appointed to the constant Execution thereof; and a Prescript Form is given unto them for the purpose: *Speak unto Aaron, saith the Lord, and to his Sons, saying, On this wise ye shall Bless the Children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord Bless thee, &c.* Where first there is a General Benediction, in these words, *The Lord Bless thee*: And then five great Blessings are specified.

I. *First*, Of Custody and Protection, in these words, *The Lord keep thee*, tending to this, that the Lord would ever be the Keeper of *Israel*, and preserve his Church and People from all Evil.

II. The

II. The *Second* Blessing mentioned, is the sense of God's Love, in the next words, *The Lord make his Face to shine upon thee.* Alluding to the Sun, which when it shineth, is sensible unto us.

III. The *Third* Blessing, is Mercy to their Sins, in these words, *The Lord be Merciful, or Gracious unto thee;* tending to this, that the Lord would in Mercy pass by their Offences, and see no Iniquity in *Jacob*, nor Transgression in *Israel*.

IV. The *Fourth* Blessing, is a plentiful Manifestation of the Love of God towards them, *The Lord lift up his Countenance upon thee.*

V. The last, but not the least, is Peace: The consequent of the rest, and the very Complement of all: *And give thee Peace.* Meaning not only External Prosperity, but also that Happy Peace with God, which passeth all Understanding, which the World cannot give.

Loe, thus did the Lord appoint his priests to Bless his People: And to that which they should do according to his
Holy

Holy Ordinance, he annexed a most Gracious Promise, saying further, *Ego Benedicam: I will Bless them.* Therefore it is to good purpose that *Illyricus* saith, that *Sacerdotal Benediction* is not a bare good Prayer, but as it were a Pledge and Testimony of the Favour of God; and he speaketh further of it, as if it were of special Power and Efficacy to open Heaven to those which are partakers thereof.

In this place of *Numbers*, we may observe three material Differences between the Priest's Blessing, and all others, making much for the Dignity and Authority thereof.

First, They are expressly required to Bless the Lord's People, they have such a Commission and Charge given unto them touching the same, as the like is not given to any throughout the whole Scripture; *Speak unto Aaron, and to his Sons, &c.*

Secondly, To them is given a prescript Form, and only to them, and to no other. We read of *Salomon*, and other Religious Kings, who have Blessed the People publicly, but not *conceptis verbis*, in any prescript Form, as did the Priests.

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Thirdly,

Sacerdotal Benediction.

Thirdly, To their *Benediction* a promise of the Lord's Blessing is annexed in such sort, as the like is not made to any other.

The three-fold difference there is between the *Priestly Benediction* and others. The Priests, the publick Ministers of the Lord, had a special Charge, a special Form, and a special Promise. First, A special Charge to do it. Secondly, a special Form how to do it. Thirdly, a special Promise, if they do it: They should not Bless in Vain, but the Lord, whose Name they thrice Invoked in the Blessing, as if it were with secret Reference to the three Persons now better known, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, promised to Confirm and Ratifie their Act, to the benefit of the People. The Priests Pronouncing the Blessing as they were appointed, he engaged himself to do according to their Prayer, and to Bless them actually and really.

Now this part of the Priests Office was not Ceremonial, but Moral, and of perpetual Use: And therefore we find, that it was put in practice both before the Law, and since the coming of Christ the like hath been done by the chief Ministers of the *New Testament*. Before the

Sacerdotal Benediction,

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the Law, we read that *Abraham* and his Company was Blest, *Gen. 14. 18.* By whom? By a Priest, namely, by *Melchizedech*, called the Priest of the most High God: And the Patriarch paid Tithes to him that Blest him. And when our High Priest came, who is a Priest for ever after the Order of *Melchizedech*, they brought the Children to him to be Blest, *And he laid his hands on them and Blessed them, Mark 10. 16. and Luke 24. 50.* Before he Departed from his Disciples, Priest like *he Lifted up his hands and Blessed them.* And the Apostles usually Blessed the Churches of Christ which they taught, and from them we have received that form of *Evangelical Benediction*, used in all Churches by the Publick Ministers: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen.* Which differeth from the former in Words more than in Substance. For it comprehendeth as much as that, but is so much the sweeter, because in this the Sweet and Blessed Name of Jesus Christ is Mentioned, and all the three Persons distinctly: Therefore we use this rather than the other.

But it may be said, Is there any Commandment given to the Ministers of the

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Gospel

Gospel to Bless ? I answer, when Christ sent Preachers abroad into the Cities whither he would come, he appointed them to Bless the Places where they came, and shewed them how to do it : Luke 10. 5. *Into whatsoever House (saith he) ye enter, first say, Peace be to this House.* There's a Brief form of Blessing appointed unto them to use. *And if (saith he) the Son of Peace be there, that is, any worthy of Peace which will receive you, then your Peace shall rest upon it :* That is, that Blessing which you Prayed for, shall be upon that House : But, *if not, it shall turn to you again :* You shall be the better for it, but it shall take no effect for their Good. Whereby we see, that as it pertained to the Priests under the Law to Bless the People, so it likewise belongeth to the Ministers of the Gospel : And as the *Priestly Benediction* of Old was not meerly Verbal, but Effectual ; so to the Blessing pronounced by the Ministers of Christ, a promise of like Efficacy is annexed. And this may serve for confirmation of the Poynt propounded, and for information of the Judgment. I come now to the Special Inferences hence, tending to the Reformation of practice, not answerable hereunto.

Now the use Concerneth either all Hearers

Hearers in General, or Ministers themselves in Special. First, all Hearers, of what rank or sort soever, are taught hence to make more account of the Prayers of Ministers, and the better to respect their Persons. First, their Prayers are to be Preferred before the Prayers of others, especially publick Prayer performed by them, and of publick Prayers, their Blessing-Prayer particularly: For it is said in the Text, *their Prayer came up to Heaven*, that is, the Prayer of the Priests, and the Prayer spoken of was publick Prayer; and it is meant of the Prayer wherewith the Priests Blessed the People. For the first, it is true that *the Prayer of the Righteous is acceptable*, as it is *Prov. 15. 8.* Even of any Righteous Man: But if a Righteous Prophet or publick Minister may be had, it is so much the better. When *Abimelech* was punish'd for taking *Sarah*, it was *Abrahams's* Prayer that must do him good, because he was a Prophet, *Gen. 20. 7.* And *St. James* for this cause would not have the sick Man to content himself with his own Prayers only, but to desire the Ministers help, *James. 5. 14.* He saith indeed, *Is any Man afflicted? Let him Pray.* Every one is to Pray for himself, but that is not all that he is to do. *Is any sick among you? Let him call for the Elders of the*

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Church, and let them Pray for him. Is any sick, be he what he will be, if he be never so good, let him not trust to his own Prayers, if he may have further help. Why, but will it not serve the turn as well, if he send for some good Christian in the Town, to Pray for him? No, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them Pray for him, and it is promised that there shall be special Fruit of their Prayers. The sick shall be raised up, and if he have committed Sins, they shall be forgiven him.

But it may be Objected: We do not always see this Fruit of Ministers Prayers: Many times the Sick that have their Prayers, are little the better for them.

I answer, it may well be so: Because there is a great difference of Church-Men, and a great difference of those which have their Prayers. First, all Church-Men are not alike, some are Righteous, and some Unrighteous: Some Pray in Faith, others have not that Grace. And the Apostle there speaketh of the Prayers of the Righteous, and instanceth in a Righteous Prophet, *Elias*. And it is the Prayer of Faith which he commendeth for Efficacy. Secondly, all afflicted and sick Persons are not alike. First, against some, Almighty God is grown to such displeasure, that he will hear no Man
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for them: As he said, *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this People: Cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth, Jere. 15.*

1. And elsewhere, *Though these three Men were in it, Noah, Daniel and Job, as I live, saith the Lord God, they should deliver but their own souls by their Righteousness, Ezech. 14. 14, 16, 18, 20.*

Secondly, that place before Named, *Luke 10. 5.* May give Satisfaction touching this matter, where promise of Blessing to the Ministers Prayer for others is but Conditional; If they be the Sons of Peace, it shall do them Good, not else If they be Contemners of our Office and Ministry, as many be, they are not qualified and perpared for Grace: They shall have no Benefit by our Prayers. But for the Sons of Peace, which Humble themselves, and unfainedly Love the Lord's Messengers, and Reverence their Doctrine, and desire their Prayers, God will hear his faithful Servants: Such shall be the better for the Prayers of God's Ministers, which they make for them unto the Lord in their Sicknes. Therefore let them do as *St. James* appointeth them, call for the Elders of the Church for this purpose, perfering the Prayers of Righteous Ministers, before the Prayers of

any others whatsoever. But as their private Prayers are specially to be Desired, so Publick Prayer performed by them, is to be Perferred before private. Such was the Prayer spoken of in the Text, *and it went up to Heaven.* The distance of Heaven and Earth, the Clouds and Celestial Bodies between them, the Infirmities of them that Prayed could not hinder, but it pierced thorough all, and had speedy access unto God, and Gracious acceptance with him. When many joyn together with one accord, it is Pleasing to God, and most Available with him, when there is a Consort of Hearts and Voices, and a Harmony of Affections, and many have one and the same Suit and Supplication unto the God of Heaven, it Prevaileth mightily with him, provided that the Minister be the Speaker. So it is appointed, *Joe. 2. 16. Gather the People.* It is not enough for every Family apart to Pray, but all Families must assemble together and Pray, and the Prayer must proceed from the Priests Lips: *Let the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord, say, Spare thy People, O Lord: Then will the Lord hear and shew Mercy.* Is there any Man then in Love with his own Private Devotion, and thinketh that Sufficient, and therefore absenteth himself

self from the publick Assemblies, when he might be present, if he would? Let him know he erreth, not knowing the Scriptures and the pleasure of God, and he certainly wrongeth his own Soul, neglecting that which would be most Profitable for him. *Non equè exoras* (saith Chrysostome) *dum solus Dominum obsecras, atque cum fratribus tuis*: Thou doest not so soon obtain thy desire when thou Prayest alone, as when thou Prayest with thy Brethren. And again, That which thou canst not obtain, when thou Prayest alone by thy self, thou shalt receive when thou Prayest with a Multitude. Thus antiquity conceived of the Power and Efficacy of publick Prayer above private.

Yea, will the Separatist say, publick Prayers (no doubt) are of great Power, if they be conceived Prayers.

I answer, indeed, to conceive Prayer, is an excellent Gift, and by no means to be despised, if it be not rashly undertaken by those which have no Grace to perform it in due sort; but I make no question but that a Man may Pray also as acceptably unto God in a set form, and so may publick Prayers as well as private be made also, as the Church hath ever practised: And it is a vain thing to think that God is so delighted with vary-
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ing of words and phrases, that when we have the same Suits and Requests to make unto him Daily, yet we must alter the words and manner of asking.

Not to press the example of our Saviour Christ himself, who had a better Gift in Prayer then all the Separatists in the world, and could have varied better then them all; yet when he had the same Suit unto God, used the same words divers times, *Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me.* Nor to urge that of the Apostles, who could Pray before after their manner, and yet desired to be taught a Prayer by Christ himself, who upon their request gave them a form: As also St. John's Disciples were taught by their Master. From the Text in hand it may be maintained against all Adversaries, that publick Prayer in a set form, is well pleasing to God, if other things be answerable: For here the Priests Blessed the People according to the set form given unto them: No judicious Writer maketh doubt of this: And it was a Prayer which they used when they Blest them: So it is called in the Text: and it was as publick as any Prayer; and yet of this publick Prayer used by the Priest in a set form, it is said, *It went up to his Holy dwelling place, even to Heaven,*

ven, to shew the singular acceptance it had with God. Wherefore let no Man Deprave our Church for this, because we use set Prayers in the Congregation; Nor let any despise such Prayers as God himself despiseth not: For we find in the Scripture use both of conceived Prayer and of set forms, and both pleasing unto God: And in our Church as ordinarily we are appointed to use Common Supplications: So upon Extraordinary occasions, the Preacher hath liberty to Inlarge, and to use the Best Gift he hath, as God shall inable him, and his Holy Spirit shall Guide his Heart and Tongue. Let all make use of both unto the Glory of God: For pleasing unto him are the publick Prayers of the Church, whether Extraordinary or Ordinary. So long as the Prayers be Good and Holy for the Matter, whether they be conceived in a set form, or Voluntary, we are to make good account of them, and use them Reverently and Religiously. But whilest I speak thus in Commendation of publick Prayer, I am far from falling into the other Extreme, as some have done, who are all for Common Prayer, and care little for Preaching. For as the Dignity of Preaching is excellent, that sufficiency being required to that part of God's Service specially, which

which the Vulgar cannot attain to : So the Necessity thereof is exceeding great, both to the *esse* of a Christian and the *bene esse*. Necessary it is to the Begetting of Souls to God, to call sinners to Repentance, to bring home the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel.

And this hath ever been the ordinary means of Converting Souls : And therefore of necessary Use at all Times, and so in these Times wherein Iniquity aboundeth ; though there be an external Profession of the true Christian Faith, necessary it is for those that are already the People of God. *Prophecyng*, saith the Apostle, *is for them that believe*. And of Old the Priests Office was not only to Pray, but to Teach : And it is said of the Levitical Priests, Deut. 33. 10. *They shall teach Jacob thy Judgments, and Israel thy law*. Presupposing that the Israelites themselves would always need teaching. *Non minor est virtus, quàm quærere partu tueri*. Preaching is necessary to the Preservation of those which are brought to the Knowledge of the Truth, and to make them grow in Grace. Therefore saith the Apostle *Peter* unto the Christians of his time, *As new born Babes, desire the sincere Milk of the Word*, that
same

same *δολονγαλα* that fraudless Milk, that ye may grow thereby, 1 Pet. 2. 2. The Word read, I confess, is of good use and profitable, but Preaching is necessary to make it so: For when that noble Eunuch of *Ethiopia* read the Scripture, though he was a Man of better Parts and Capacity than hundreds of our People, yet he confessed his own Disability, and said, *How can I understand, without a guide?*

Necessary it is also to the due performance of other Parts of God's Service; as, to the more worthy receiving of the Holy Sacrament. Without the help of a Preacher, or Catechizer, the common sort go to the Lord's Table without Preparation, not discerning the Lord's Body, nor knowing the end and right use of the sacred Mysteries, but by a good Preacher's Labour, Communicants are better taught, and come better prepared to that Holy Service, and do it more understandingly and comfortably. What should I say more? To good Praying, good Preaching is necessary. As poor People cannot understand the Scripture without a Guide, nor understand the Mystery of the Sacrament without a Guide: So they are as ignorant in Prayer also: The Lord's Prayer they say often, but understand not; and ignorantly they use
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other Prayers, not knowing what they say: Sometimes they pray for what they hate; as those that pray that the rest of their Life may be pure and holy, when as in heart they desire no such Change in themselves, but hate Purity and Holiness, and despise all that follow it: And those that are no Prayers, they use for Prayers, thinking them to be so: Not only Children, but old Men think they pray, and pray well, when they say the Creed and Ten Commandments.

There being therefore such Necessity of Preaching, I can but wonder, that upon the best Day of the Week, many Country People are afraid to do nothing, but to go forth to hear a Sermon. They dare ride abroad about their worldly Bu-
sinesses, as often as they list; they dare go to all the prophane Wakes in the Country one Sunday after another, but dare not go to a Sermon so much as half a Sabbath Days Journey, though they have none at home, as they would make Men believe for fear of Apparitors and Church-wardens. I do the more wonder at it, because I perswade my self, that our religious Fore-fathers, which had a hand in setting forth the *Common-Prayer Book*, now established by Authority, held, and would have the People taught

taught the Necessity of hearing the Word of God : For they have appointed Prayers to be used, that the Lord would give Ministers Grace to preach diligently, and it is given in charge to the Sureties at Baptism, that when the Baptized come to Years, they call upon them to hear Sermons, not thinking it sufficient for them to hear Service only. And none have written more effectually of the Excellency of Preaching, then those learned and worthy Doctors and Divines, which took pains lately in the Translation of the Bible ; See what they have written of this in their Epistle to his Majesty : *Amongst all our Joys, say they, there was no one that more filled our Heatts, than the blessed Continuance of the preaching of God's Sacred Word amongst us, which is that inestimable Treasure, which excelleth all the Riches of the Earth, because the Fruit thereof extendeth it self, not only to the Time spent in this Transitory World, but directeth and disposeth Men unto that eternal Happiness, which is above in Heaven, &c.*

Thus Honourably have they written of the preaching of the Word : And these I am sure were no Puritans ; for they have written against Puritans, and therefore there can be no such Exception taken.

Certainly the Doctrine of our Church
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is, and ever hath been, for the Necessity and Utility of preaching and hearing of the Word of God, and herein it is consonant unto the Scriptures, and to the Doctrine of all Orthodox Churches: And the contrary tendeth to the Dishonour of the most famous Divines, Pastors and Prelates of our own Church, and of other Churches of Christ, which now rest from their Labours: Nay, to the Doctrine and Practice of the best of the Fathers *Greek* and *Latin*, who in their Times were instant this way in Season and out of Season; nay, of the Holy Apostles; nay, of Christ Jesus the great Shepheard of our Souls, who took incessant Pains in preaching and teaching both in the Temple and else where, accounting the Temple not only a House of Prayer, but a House of Preaching also; for he *sate daily teaching in the Temple*. Therefore let Comparisons between Praying and Preaching be for born: They are both the Holy Ordinances of God, of necessary Use for all the Lord's People. *Pray continually*, as the Apostle saith (meaning it of secret Ejaculations of the Heart, not of publick Prayer.) Pray also in your Families. It is a pious and religious Practice well becoming Christians. - Pray also with the Congregation, despise not the publick Prayers

Prayers of the Church, nor neglect them, but diligently attend them, and make use of them Reverently, lest while ye come to Worship God, ye take his Name in vain; but withal Remember the other Admonition of the Apostle, *Despise not Prophecy*. Let not a pretended Zeal for more Praying, juggle out Preaching: For this is also the Ordinance of God as well Prayer; of as great necessity for the people; without which, Prayer and all parts of God's Service and Worship, will be the worse Performed. I say no more; but to magnify Preaching with contempt of Prayer, is intolerable; and to extol Praying with contempt of Preaching, is abominable.

And thus much concerning publick Prayer, and of the account that we are to make of it, being performed by a Minister.

More particularly, there is special regard to be yielded to the *Blessing-Prayer* or *Benediction* used by the Pastor or Preacher in the Congregation. It is a disorderly Custom in many Churches, that a Number will be gone, before the *evangelical Blessing* be pronounced. Ignorant People! they understand not the way of the Lord, and what the Lord hath ordained for their Good. Almighty

Great regard to be had to the Blessing pronounced by the Minister.

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God

God Promised to Bless the Children of Israel. But how? In that order which himself appointed; they being first Blessed by the Priests. So now, through the Blessing of his Ministers, he will convey a Blessing to his People. As therefore the Minister of Christ is Reverently to lift up his Hand over the Heads of the People, and with all Religious and Holy Affection to Bless them *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*: So the People are to wait for this Blessing; and when it is pronounced, attentively to Mark it, and Rejoyce in it, and in the end devoutly to say *Amen* unto it; that so they may depart home Comfortably with the Blessing to the Church and of the Lord. And hitherto of the account to be made of Ministers Prayers, and especially of the public Prayers and Blessings performed by them. All sorts are also hence taught, to have due regard unto their Persons and Calling for this respect: For their Office is Honourable and Reverend: To them it belongeth to Bless, and by them God will Bless those whom he will Bless. And what saith the Apostle? *The Less is Blessed of the Greater*, Heb. 7. 7.

Sacerdotal Benediction.

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And what other Office is appointed unto them that is Base? They are called to be Teachers in *Israel*, to be Guides unto the People, and to shew unto them the way of Life: To them it Pertaineth to Administer the Holy Sacraments, that of Baptism, and the other, of the Lord's Supper, which the Fathers of the Nicene Councel call *Necessarium vite vaticum*: The necessary provision for the Soul in her Journey to another World. To them it pertaineth to Pray for the People, and to make Atonement for them, that they may be Reconciled unto God. To them is given the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and power to bind and loose, and to remit Sines, *propravitās & declarativē*. Which of all these is base and unseemly for Men of worth to do? Which of them is not High and Holy?

Why then is the Calling so Contemptible, as it is with many, above all others? Why is the Name of Priest used in Contempt? Of all Contempt, this is the most unreasonable: For God hath highly Honoured those of this Function, and they are separated to Great and Noble Services. Behold, God hath made them Fathers unto the People. So *Micah* called the Young Levite, *Judg. 17.*

Pendebar
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All Offices
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Can,

10. *Dwell with me, and be a Father and a Priest unto me.* And so the *Danites* call him after. And worthy is the Name given to them; and with the Name, the Honour should be given also: For they are Instruments of Regeneration, as Parents be of Generation; and as

Chrysost. de Sacerd.

Chrysostome Reasoneth, Parents beget their Children unto this Life, but the Ministers of Christ beget them to Life Eternal: And Parents cannot do that for them, which Ministers may do. Parents may wash their Bodily parts, but Ministers are Instruments to wash their Souls, when they Baptize them. Parents feed them with Meat that Perisheth: But Ministers, their Spiritual Fathers, feed them with that Meet which endureth to Everlasting Life, Namely with the Word of the Lord, and with the Body of the Lord.

Salurian.

lib. 4.

pag. 61.

Chrysost.

in Mat.

Hom. 13.

Titus 3. 5.

Baptism, which they Administer, of Old was called and accounted *Janua salutis*, The Gate of Heaven: In the Old Saxon Doctrine, The Well-spring of Life: In the best times, The Laver of Regeneration. And it is written, *Except a Man be Born again of Water and of the Spirts, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, Joh. 3. 5.* And else where, *Whoever*

ever eateth not the flesh of the Lord, and doth not drink his Blood, he shall dye Eternally, *Joh. 6. 53.* And these things, saith an Ancient Father, cannot be received of the People, but *per sacrosanctas manus Sacerdotum*: By the sacred Hands of the Priests of the *New Testament*; to others it pertaineth not to meddle with the Dispensation of these Holy and Venerable Mysteries: It were Presumption in a Prince to Administer either Sacrament: To the Minister it pertaineth to Bless the Bread, and Cup of Blessing, and from their Hands the Lord's People are to receive the Bread of Life, and Cup of Salvation. But to which of the Angels, said that Holy Father, said he at any time, as he hath said unto his Ministers, *Whatsoever ye bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven. Whosoever's sins ye remit, they shall be remitted?* These Things surpass all the Rest. Hence worthy Pastors of the Church, Men of courage, upon weighty occasion, have been bold to Excommunicate Emperors, as *Ambrose* Excommunicated *Theodosius*; and *Fabian* Excommunicated *Philip*.

And it is Memorable, that *Paulinus* writeth, that when *Ambrose* denounced Excommunication against a dissolute Person, in the very Instant, whilst he used

Math. 18.

18.

Joh. 20.

23.

Theod.

lib. 5.

cap. 24.

Euseb.

lib. 6.

cap. 34.

Emperours

Excom-

municated

by Mini-

sters.

Paulinus

in vita

Ambrosii.

the Words, the Man was suddenly taken and rent by the Devil. Let these Things be Considered of advisedly by such as have hitherto been carried with the Stream, and have Rashly by words, or deeds, or both, shewed Contempt of the Ministry; and seeing what High and Honourable Offices and Priviledges the Most High God hath Appropriated unto his Servants whom he hath called to that Function, let them reform their former Erroneous Judgment of them, and their Carriage towards them: And that the Vulgar sort may be the Better taught their Duty in this, let those in Authority put a difference between those whom God hath so Highly Honoured, and others which have no such Priviledges given unto them of the Lord. It is notable that is Written of *Salomon*, 1 *King* 2. when *Abiathar* the Priest had committed a Crime worthy of Death, yet he would not put him to Death, but said unto him, *Get thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields, &c. Because thou barest the Arke of the Lord God, &c.* He put *Joab* to Death, a great Counsellor of State, but spared the Life of *Abiathar*, in Reverence of his Priest-hood. A worthy example. Thanks be to God, we live now under a Religious Kings, who being
 Learned

Sacerdotal Benediction.

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Learned in the Scriptures, is like-minded to *Salomon* this way, and like another *Constantine*, is exceedingly well-affected to the Church. Long since He gave Instruction to his Eldest Son, to cherish none more than a Godly Pastor, and to count it one of the Fairest of his Titles, to be a Loving Nursing Father of the Church. He hath since Published his Pleasure, to have his Clergy well used; and knowing the Power given unto them of Christ, He hath advised Men to have recourse unto a discreet Church-Man, well reputed for good Life, and to reveal his Spiritual Estate to him, &c. and He hath taken Special Notice of this *Ministerial Prerogative* of Blessing, which others little mind; and therefore He Required a Religious and Zealous Divine, of Great Note and Place in our Church, to Preach the *Tuesday* after the Marriage of his only Daughter, and solemnly to Bless the New Married couple; who performed it so Worthily, and with Zeal so Inflamed the Zeal of the Hearers, that it was no other like but *his Prayer went up to Heaven*, and the Fruitfulness of that Princely Lady hath since Evidenced as much.

*Barth.
Sweg.*

The King
upon the
Lords
Prayer.

Doctor
King Bi-
shop of
London.

I have heard also an Honourable Per-

son say of Ministers, God Bless them by whom God Blesseth us. A worthy Speech, & giving his Observation of that special Prerogative given of God unto his Ministers, to Bless in his Name. The Time hath been, that Preachers have been too Disgracefully used by Temporal Judges in the Face of the Country: But since his Majesty's coming to the Crown, there hath been better respect had towards them: And a great Judge of Assize Professed it publicly, that he would assoon Bind a Man to his good Behaviour for Contempt of a Minister, as for Contempt of a Magistrate.

Ecclesiastical Courts why Ordained. A view of the Civil and Ecclesiastical Law.

P. 105.

Now, in Ecclesiastical Courts, we have reason to expect better regard than in the Temporal: For to that End those Courts and Consistories were Granted at the first by Princes, as it is Confessed by one that is not only *in legibus doctus & peritus*, but *legum Doctor*, because the Clergy were like to have more Indifferency before a Judge of their own Learning, then before a Judge of another Profession; it being held, that *Laici oppidò semper infesti sunt Clericis*: Lay-Men are seldom Clergy-Mens Friends. And another reason of this, he saith, was, that Clerks Suites and Quarrels should not be Divulged among the Lay People, to the discredit

discredit of their profession. Otherwise the said Author also sheweth, how much Anciently the Credit of the Clergy was tendred; and he wisheth the like Regard towards *Ecclesiastical Men* were still Retained, both because it was Reverent, and worthy the Dignity of the Ministry, whose Office he acknowledgeth to be most Honourable. Thus he, himself a Judge in the *Ecclesiastical Courts*, of Great Place. That Authority therefore is not Rightly used, nor agreeable to the Institution thereof, if in *Ecclesiastical Courts* the Clergy have not only no Injuries and Indignities offered unto them; but if they have not, in stead thereof, Protection, and Countenance, and Encouragement in all Good.

I take no delight in finding Faults, especially with my Superiours and Betters; but yet I hate Base Adulation. It is thought to be not so well as it should be, that so many Advantages are given unto ill Neighbours against their Ministers. It is good for the Greatest to remember what Jesus Christ (before whom all must appear to give Account) hath left in Record concerning his Ministers: *He that Despiseth you, Despiseth me.*

I leave the Prosecuting of this further, and advise all would have Benefit by *Ecclesiastical Benediction*, to Deserve the Love of those to whom that Office belongeth *jure divino*: For though we are to Bless all, yet we cannot Bless all with the like Effect, or with the like Affection. Not with like Effect; for all are not the Sons of Peace: And those that are not, are Uncapable of this Blessing. Nor with the like Affection: For in some we have more, in some less Comfort. We cannot Bless all with the like Affection as we can Bless our Friends, and such as are Comfortable unto us, and Instruments of our good. When *Isaac* had a desire to Bless his Son *Esau*, he bids him first Provide him Savoury Meat that would give him Content; and having such brought unto him by *Jacob*, when he had Eate of the Venison, and drank Wine, then he called, *Now come near me, Kiss me, my Son: God give thee of the Dew of Heaven, &c.* A thing very Remarkable, that before the Holy Patriarch undertook to Bless his Son, he first would have Savoury Meat provided by him whom he meant to Bless; and first he Eate thereof, and Drank Wine, to cheer up his Spirits, that so he might Bless him the more Heartily and Effectually: For
Heaviness,

Sacerdotal Benediction.

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† Heaviness, and Grief, and Sorrow, and Discontentment maketh a good Man unfit for the Right performance of such Duties. Therefore when *Elisha* was Moved against King *Jehoram*, before he tell to Prophecie, he called for a Musician to allay his Anger.

† According to the Maxim of the Jewish Doctors: *Spiritus Sanctus non cadit in morsum.*

We may observe also, that when *Jacob* Blessed his Sons, he Blessed them not all alike: But Blessings flowed most plentifully from him when he came to *Joseph*, because he took most comfort in him of all the Rest. So the Ministers of the Gospel are most ready to Bless them, whom they have most comfort from, as they in *Luke 7*. Were forward to speak to Christ for the Centurion, when he stood in need of help. Why? *He loveth our Nation, and hath Built us a Synagogue.* And Saint *Paul* Prayed for all Christians, but not so as he did for *Onesiphorus* his special good Friend: When he Remembred him, *2 Tim. 1. 16*, he Blessed him and his House, and doubled his Blessing upon him, *The Lord give mercy to the House of Onesiphorus, for he oft Refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my Chain.* And again, *The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that Day.* He Prayed not so, I wish for *Alexander the Copper-smith*. These

Priests did not, could not at all Times Bless the People so Chearfully and Effectually as they did now. Now it is said, that *Hezekiah* spake Comfortably unto them, and Encouraged them Greatly. Now they found the Congregation tractable to Good, and they had Extraordinary Comfort by them: Therefore now their Zeal was up, and they Lifted up their Voices, and their Hearty Prayer for them Ascended up to Heaven. Excellent therefore is the Counsel of the Apostle, Heb. 13. 17. *Obey them that have the oversight of you, who Watch for your Souls, that they may do it with Joy, and not with Grief; for that is unprofitable for you.* It maketh their Blessing the more unprofitable. Therefore let those which would be Bled by them Effectually, look they deserve their Love, and be far from Contempt of their Persons, or Calling, or Doctrine.

I should also use a word of Exhortation to my Brethren of the Ministry: The more Holy and Reverend our Calling is, the more it concerneth us to look that we walk worthy thereof, and to be ware lest we Dishonour it by our Words or Deeds. My Brethren, it is not for us to be dispisers of those which follow Holiness; for our Doctrine Teacheth us, and
all

all others, to be Holy; it is not for us to be Childish: For God hath called even the Youngest of us, to be Fathers in his Church, and made us, (as it were) Patriarchs, to Bless the *Israel* of God; it is not for us to be Youthful with the Children of this World: For we are called Elders; and therefore Gravity becometh us. That which is Vanity in others, is Double Iniquity in us. The Excellency of our Ministerial Function aggravateth our sins before God and Men, according to that of St. *Jerome*; *Malus Sacerdos de Sacerdotio suo crimen acquirit, non Dignitatem*: If a Minister be bad, this aggravateth his Offence, because he is a Minister: And his Ministry is no such Grace to him, as he is a Disgrace to his Ministry. And Observe what cometh of it: Those that are Scrupulous, care not for the Judgment of such as be Scandalous about any Point in Controversie.

Brownists think they have just cause to Seperate from our Church, where such Guides are in place of better Men. The Jesuit and Seminary Priest taketh Advantage thereby to deprave our Religion, and to Breed in the Simpler sort an ill Opinion thereof: They Name, such are known to be of Evil Conversation, and bid,
Marke

* Sir Tho-
mas
Moore.

Marke their Lives. An unhappy Meaning * He had, though he spake it Pleasantly, who said of a Vicious Priest, that he would not for any thing hear him say the Creed, lest it should make him call the Articles of his Faith into question. Certainly those of this sacred Function, which are of ungodly Conversation, are an occasion of much Mischief.

Many have no mind to have their Children Baptized by such; and it goeth against their stomach to Receive the Venerable Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood from their Foul Hands: And their Blessings and Prayers they regard little, because they see they regard *Wickedness in their Hearts*: And therefore they think the Lord will not Hear them. Many also care not for their Doctrine, because they say, and do not. I justifie not all this in them, but rather think they are Transported too far in a Preposterous Zeal. For good Food being brought unto *Elias*, he Received it not only from an Angel, but also from a Raven. And Christ bid the Poople not only to Hear him and his Apostles, but the *Pharises* also, when they taught them that
which

which was good, though they followed it not themselves. Good Water which Passeth into a Garden thorow a Channel of Stone, doth the Garden good, though it do the Channel none: And so may the Word, and Water of Life conveighed by a bad Instrument of a Stoney Heart; it may do good to the Church of God, though it work not upon himself. And good Seed sown in good Ground with fowl Hands, will Fructifie: And so may the Good Seed of God's Word sown by a Minister of impure Conversation. One may be a bad Man, and yet a good Seedesman both in the Field and in the Church: Yet *woe be to them by whom the Offence cometh*; Woe to them who make the People to Abhor the Offering of the Lord through their Misdemeanour. *Eli* his Sons smoked for this. And to many which have Prophecied in his Name, Christ will say in his just Displeasure, *Away from me, ye workers of Iniquity.*

Therefore to Conclude, the Lord give us all Grace so to Demean our selves in our Places, that his Name may be Glorified by us, his Church Edified, and our Reverend Calling Adorned, that
our

Sacerdotal Benediction.

our Prayers may be accepted of the Lord, and our Blessing of the People may with this *Priestly Benediction*, go up unto his Holy dwelling Place, even unto Heaven; which he grant for his Infinite Mercies sake in Christ: To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost be Ascribed all Praise and Glory now and ever. *Amen.*

6 AP 58

F I N I S.

A
DISCOURSE
PUBLISHED
To Instruct and Undeceive the PEOPLE
In the Point of
TITHES.

WHEREIN is shewed,

- I. That never any Clergy in the Church of God hath been, or is maintain'd with less Charge to the Subject, than the Establish'd Clergy of the Church of *ENGLAND*.
- II. That there is no Subject in the Realm of *ENGLAND*, who giveth any thing of his own, towards the maintenance of his Parish-Minister but his *Easter-Offering*.
- III. That the change of *Tithes* into *Stipends*, will bring greater trouble to the Clergy than is yet considered; and far less profit to the Country, than is now pretended.

By Ph. Treleinie Gent.

1 Cor. 9. 7.

Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a Vineyard and eateth not of the Fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock; and eateth not of the milk of the flock?

LONDON: Printed for W. TAYLOR, at the Ship,
in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1708.

DISCOURSE

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THE Indeceiving of the PEOPLE

In the point of

TITHES.

AMongst those popular Deceits which have been set abroad of late to abuse the People, there is not any one which hath been cherish'd with more endearments, than perfwasion put into them of not paying *Tithes*: Partly, because it carrieth no small shew of Profit with it; but principally as it seems a conducive means to make the *Clergy* more obnoxious to them, and to stand more at their Devotion than they have done formerly. Upon these Hopes, it hath been the endeavours of some leading Men to represent it to the rest as a *publick Grievance*, That the *Clergy* being but a handful of Men in comparison of all the rest of the Kingdom,

dom, should go away with the *Tenth* (or as some say, the *Sixth* part) of the Fruits of the Earth; and that the *Minister* sitting still in his Contemplations, should live upon the Sweat of other Mens Brows; and taking pains amongst the People but One Day in Seven, should have the *Tenth part of their Estates* allotted to them for their Maintenance. And 'tis no marvel if some few, on these misperwasions, have Importun'd the High Court of Parliament from time to time with troublesome and clamorous Petitions to redress this Wrong; and put them up also in the name of whole Counties (although the generality of those Counties had no hand therein) to add the greater Credit and Authority to them. In which Design, although they have prevail'd no further on the two Houses of Parliament, than to be sent away with this general Promise, *That in due time their Petitions should be taken into consideration*; * and that it was the pleasure of the severall and respective Houses, *that in the mean season they should take care that Tithes be duly paid according to Law*: Yet they which have espoused the Quarrel will not so be satisfied. For when it pleased the Lords and Commons to set out an Ordinance bearing

* As in the Answer to those of Hartford, Kent, &c.

ing Date November 8. 1644. For the true Payment of Tithes and other Duties according to the Laws and Customs of this Realm; there came out presently a Pamphlet entitled, *The Dismounting of the Ordinance for Tithes*; followed and backed by many a scandalous Paper of the self-same strain. And when it seemed good to the said Lords and Commons, on the precipitancy of some of the Clergy under Sequestration, to set out their Additional Ordinance of the 9th of August, Anno 1647, it was encountred presently with a scurrilous Pamphlet, entitled, *A Preparation for a Day of Thanksgiving to the Parliament for their late Ordinance for Tithes, newly Mounted and well Charged with treble Damages, for the Peoples not giving the Tenth part of their Estates to the Clergy, or Impropiators*. And this, according to the Stile of those Petitions, is said to be the Result of the Parliaments Friends in *Hartfordshire*; tho' I am verily perswaded that few, if any of the Gentry and Men of quality in the Country, were acquainted with it. But be it the result of few or many of the Parliaments Friends (tho' I conceive they are but back-friends to the Parliament, who set so slight a value on their Constitutions) the Title doth afford

The undeceiving of the People

two things worthy consideration: First, That the Maintenance of the Clergy here by Law established, is said to be by giving them the Tenth part of every Mans Estate: And Secondly, That the blow goes higher than before it did, and aims not only at the devesting of the Church of her ancient Patrimony, but at the depriving of the Gentry of their Improvements, which many of them hold by Lease, many by Inheritance, all by as good a Title as the Law can make them. I know there hath been great pains taken by some Learned Men, to state the Institution and Right of Tithes, and several judicious Tractates have been writ about it; which notwithstanding have not found such entertainment as they did deserve; partly, because written in an Argumentative way, they were above the reach of the vulgar Reader; but principally, because written by Men engaged in the Cause, and such as might be bias'd with their own Interest in it. For my part I am free from all those engagements which may incline me to write any thing for my private Ends, being *one that payeth Tithes* and such other Duties as the Laws and Ordinances do injoyn. And tho' I sit far off from the fountain of business,

and

and cannot possible see at so great a distance, what might best satisfy the doubts and clamours of unquiet Men; yet I shall venture to say somewhat in a modest way towards the *Undeceiving of the People* in this point of *Tithes*, whose Judgments have been captivated by those mis-perswasions, which cunningly have been communicated and infused into them. And I shall do it in a way, (if I guess aright) which hath not yet been travelled in this present point; such as I hope will satisfy all them of the adverse party, but those who are resolv'd before-hand, that they will not be satisfied. For whereas the whole controverſie turneth on these three hinges: First, That the Maintenance allowed the Clergy is too great for their Calling, especially considering the small number of them; Secondly, That it is made up out of the Tenth part of each Man's Estate: And Thirdly, That the changing of this way by the payment of Tithes into that of *Stipends*, would be more grateful to the Country, and more easie to the Clergy: I shall accordingly reduce this small Discourse unto these three Heads.

First, I will shew that never any Clergy in the Church of God hath been,

The undeceiving of the People

or is maintained with less Charge to the Subject, than the established Clergy of the Church of *England*. Secondly, That there is no Man in the Realm of *England*, who payeth any thing of *his own* towards the maintenance of his Parish Minister, but his *Easter Offering*. And Thirdly, That the *changing of Tithes into Stipends* would bring greater trouble to the Clergy, than is yet considered, and far less profit to the Country, than is now pretended.

These Propositions being proved, (which I doubt not of) I hope I shall receive no check for my undertaking, considering that I do it of a good intent to free the Parliament from the trouble of the like Petitions, and that the *common People being disabused*, may quietly and chearfully discharge their Duties according to the Laws established; and live together with that unity and godly Love which ought to be between a Minister and his Congregation. This is the sum of my Design, which if I can effect, it is all I aim at: And with this Declaration of my mind and meaning, I trust this short Discourse of mine will be, if not applauded, yet at least excused. First then I am to prove this point:

I. That

I. That never any Clergy in the Church of God, hath been, or is Maintained with less Charge to the Subject, than the established Clergy of the Church of England.

For proof of this, we must behold the Church of God, as it stood under the Law in the Land of Canaan, and as it now stands under the Gospel in the most flourishing parts of Christendom. Under the Law, the Tribe of Levi was possessed of Forty eight Cities, and the Territories round about them, extending every way for the space of 2000 Cubits, which in so small a Country, was a greater proportion, than the Kents received by the Clergy of all the Bishopricks and Chapter Lands in the Realm of England. Then had they besides Tithes (whereof more anon) the first-born of Mankind, and all unclean Beasts, which were redeemed at the rate of five Shekels apiece, amounting in our Money to 12 s. 6 d. and of the firstlings of clean Beasts, their Blood being sprinkled on the Altar, and the Fat offered for a burnt-offering, the Flesh remained unto the Priests. Of which, see *Numb.* 18. 15, 16, 17, 18. They had also the first-fruits of Wine, Oyl and Wooll, *Deut.* 18. 4. yea, and of all things else which the Earth brought

The undeceiving of the People

brought forth for the use of Man; the first-fruits of the Dough, *Numb.* 15. 20, 21. the *meat-offerings*, the *sin-offerings*, the * *Lev.* 2. *trespass-offerings*, * the *shake-offerings*, the 3. and 7. *heave-offerings*, and the *shoe-bread*; As also of all Eucharistical Sacrifices, the *breast* and the *shoulder*; of others, the *shoulder* † *Lev.* 7. and the *two cheeks*, and the *man*; † and 33. 34. of the whole *Burnt-offering*, they received † *ib.* v. 8. the *skin*. || Then add, that all the Males of the Tribes of *Israel*, were to appear thrice yearly before the Lord, and none of them came empty-handed: And that if any had detained any thing in part or in whole, which was due by Law, he was to bring a *Ram* for an offering, to make good that which was detained, and to add a *fifth part* to it in the way of recompence. Besides, *These Duties were brought in to the Priests and Levites without Charge or Trouble*. And if any for their own ease desired not to pay in kind, but to redeem the same for a sum of Money; the estimation of the due was to be made by the Priest; ∴ and a fifth part added, as before, for full satisfaction. In a word, such and so many allowances had the Priests and Levites, that setting by the Tithes of their Corn and Cattel, and of all manner of increase; their

∴ *Lev.* 27.
12. 13.

in the point of Tithes.

11

their maintenance had far exceeded that of the *English Clergy*; and adding unto these the Tithes of all Creatures tithable, it doth more than double it. For in the payment of their Tithes *by the Lords appointment*, there was not only a full tenth of all kinds of increase, but such an imposition laid on all kinds of Grain, as came to more than a sixth part of the Crop it self; in so much that of 6000 Bushels, 1121 accrued into the *Priests and Levites*; 4779 remaining only to the Husbandman. For first, out of 6000 Bushels (and so accordingly in all after that proportion) a sixtieth part at least, (and that they termed *Therumah* of the *evil eye*, or the *Niggards first-fruits*) was to be set apart for the first-fruits of the Threshing-floor; which was One hundred in the Total. Out of the residue, being 5900 Bushels, the first Tithe payable to the Levites, which lived dispersed and inter mingled in the rest of the Tribes, came to 590 Bushels; and of the residue being 5310 Bushels, 531 were paid for the second Tithe unto the Priests, which ministred before the Lord in his holy Temple; yet so, that such as would decline the trouble of carrying it in kind unto *Jerusalem*, might pay the price thereof in money according to the estimate

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mate which the *Priests* made of it. To which a fifth part being added (as in other cases) did so improve this Tithe to the *Priests* advantage; as that which being paid in kind, was but Ten in the Hundred, being thus altered into money, made no less than Twelve. Now lay these several sums together, and of 6000 Bushels, as before was said, there will accrew 1121 to the Priest and Levite, and but 4779 to the Lord or Tenant. By which accompt the *Priests* and *Levites* in the tithing of 6000 Bushels, receiv'd twice as much within a little, as is possessed or claimed by the *English Clergy*, even where the Tithes are best paid without any exemptions, which are so frequent in this Kingdom.

But then perhaps it will be said, that the *Levites* made up one of the Twelve Tribes of *Israel*, and having no inheritance amongst the rest but the Tithes and Offerings, besides the Forty Eight Cities before mention'd, were to be settled in way of maintenance correspondent unto that proportion. But so (they say) it is not in the case of the *English Clergy*, who are so far from being one of Twelve or Thirteen at most, that they are hardly One for an Hundred; or as a late Pamphlet doth infer, not one for Five hundred.

dred. * Who on this supposition, that * Tithe-
there are Five hundred Men and Women gatherers
in a Country Parish, the Lands whereof no Gospel-
are worth 2000 l. *per annum*, and that the Ministers.
Minister goeth away with 400 l. a year of
the said 2000: concludeth, that he hath
as much for his own Particular, as any
Sixscore of the Parish, supposing them to
be all Poor or all Rich alike; and then
cries out against it, as the *greatest Cheat*
and Robbery that was ever practised.

But the answer unto this is easie, I
would there were no greater difficulties
to perplex the Church. First, for the
Tribe of *Levi*, it is plain and evident,
that though it pass commonly by the
name of a Tribe, yet was it none of the
Twelve Tribes of *Israel*, the House of
Joseph being sub-divided into two whole
Tribes, those namely of *Ephraim* and
Manasseh, which made up the Twelve.
And secondly, it is as evident, that it fell
so short of the proportion of the other
Tribes, as not to make a sixtieth part of
the House of *Jacob*; for in the general
Muster which was made of the other
Tribes, of Men of Twenty years and
upwards, such only as were fit for Arms
and such publick services, the number of
them came unto 635500 fighting Men;
to which if we should add all those which
were

were under Twenty years and unfit for service, the number would at least be doubled. But the *Levites* being all reckoned from a Month old and above, their number was but 22000 in all, (of which see *Num. 1. 46. & 3. 39.*) which came not to so many by 273 as the only *first born* of the other Tribes ; and therefore when the Lord took the *Levites* for the *first born* of *Israel*, the odd 273 were redeemed according to the Law, at five Shekels a Man, and the Money, which amounted to 1365 Shekels, was given to *Aaron* and his Sons, *Num. 7. 47, 48.* Which ground so laid according to the Holy Scriptures, let us next take a view of the *English Clergy*, and allowing but one for every Parish, there must be 9725, according to the number of the Parish Churches ; or say Ten Thousand in the Total, the residue being made up of Curates officiating in the Chappels of Ease throughout the Kingdom ; and reckoning in all their Male Children from a Month old and upwards, the number must be more than trebled. For although many of the dignified and beneficed Clergy do lead single lives, yet that defect is liberally supplied by such Married Curates as do officiate under them in their several Churches. And then, as to the dispropo-

disproportion which is said to be between the Clergy and the rest of the People, one to Five Hundred at the least: The Computation is ill grounded, the Collection worse. For *First*, the Computation ought not to be made between the Minister and all the rest of the Parish, Men, Women, and Children, Masters, and Dames, Men-servants, and Maid-servants, and the Stranger which is within the Gates; but between him and such whose Estates are Titheable, and they in most Parishes are the smallest Number. For setting by all Children which live under their Parents, Servants, Apprentices, Artificers, Day-labourers and Poor indigent People; none of all which have any interest in the Titheable Lands: The number of the residue will be found so small, that probably the Minister may make one of the Ten, and so possess no more than his own share comesto. And then how miserably weak is the Collection which is made from thence, that this One Man should have as much as any Sixscore of the rest of the Parish, (supposing that the Parish did contain 500 Persons) or that his having of so much were a *Cheat and Robbery*? And as for that objection which I find much stood on, that the *Levites* had no other Inheritance but the
Tithes

Tithes and Offerings, *Numb. 18. 23.* whereas the *English Clergy* are permitted to purchase Lands, and to inherit such as descend unto them; the answer is so easy, it will make it self; for let the Tithes enjoyed by the *English Clergy* descend from them to their Posterity, from one Generation to another, as did the Tithes and Offerings on the Tribe of *Levi*: and I perswade my self, that none of them will be busied about purchasing Lands, or be an Eye-sore to the People in having more to live on than their Tithes and Offerings. Till that be done, excuse them if they do provide for their Wives and Children, according to the Laws both of God and Nature. And for the so much *Parallel* in point of maintenance, between the Clergy of this Church and the Tribe of *Levi*.

Proceed we next unto the Ministers of the *Gospel* at the first Plantation, during the lives of the Apostles, and the times next following, and we shall find, that *though they did not actually receive Tithes of the People, yet they still kept on foot their Right*; and in the mean time, till they could enjoy them in a peaceable way, were so provided for of all kind of necessities, that their was nothing wanting to their Contentation. *First, that they kept on foot their Right,* and

and thought that Tithes belonged as properly to the Evangelical Priesthood, as unto the Legal, seems evident unto me by St. Paul's discourse ; who proves *Melchisedech's* Priesthood by these two Arguments : First, that he Blessed *Abraham* ; and Secondly, that he Tithed him, or receiv'd Tithes of him. For though in our *English* Translation it be only said, that he *received Tithes of Abraham*, which might imply that *Abraham* gave them as a Gift, or a Free-will-offering, and that *Melchisedech* received them in no other fence ; yet in the *Greek* it is *ἡδυνάτωρε τὸ Ἀβραάμ*, which in plain *English* is, that he Tithed *Abraham*, and took them of him as his due, *Heb. 7. 6*. If then our Saviour be a *Priest after the order of Melchisedech*, as no doubt he is, he must have power to Tithe the People as well as to Bless them, or else he comes not home to the Type or Figure : Which power of Tithing of the People, or receiving *Tithes* of them, since he exerciseth not in Person ; it seems to me to follow upon very good consequence, that he hath devolved this part of his power on those whom he hath Called, and Authorised for to Bless the People.

Certain I am, the Fathers of the Primitive times, though they enjoyed not

B

Tithes

Tithes in specie, by reason that the Church was then unsettled, and as it were in motion to the Land of Rest, (in which condition those of *Israel* paid no Tithes to *Levi*) yet they still kept their claim unto them, as appears clearly out of *Origen*, and some other Ancients. And of this truth I think no question need be made amongst knowing Men. The only question will be this, Whether the maintenance which they had till the Tithes were paid, were not as chargeable to the People, as the Tithes now are (supposing that the Tithes were the Subjects own ?) For my part I conceive it was, the People of those Pious times not thinking any thing too much to bestow on God, for the encouragement of his Ministers, and the reward of his Prophets. They had not else *sold off their Lands and Houses, and brought the prices of the things which were sold, and laid them at the Apostles feet*, as we know they did, *Acts 4. 34, 35.* but that they meant, that the Apostles should supply their own wants out of those Oblations, as well as the necessities of their poorer Brethren. I trow, the selling of all, and trusting it to the dispensing of their Teachers, was matter of more charge to such as had Lands and Houses, than paying the Tenth part of their House-rent, or the Tithe of their Lands. And when this Custom

from was laid by, (as possibly it might end with the Apostles themselves) the Offerings which succeeded in the place thereof, and are requir'd, or injoyn'd by the *Apostolical Canons*, were so great and manifold, that there was nothing necessary to the Life of Man, as Hony, Milk, Fowl, Flesh, Grapes, Corn, Oyl, Frankincense, Fruits of the Season, yea Strong Drink, and Sweet Meats, which was not liberally offered on the *Altars*, or *Oblation-Tables*: Infomuch as the Author of the Book called the *Holy Table, Name, and Thing, &c.* according to his scornful manner, saith of them, that *they were rather Pantaries, Larders, or Store-houses, than so many Consecrated Altars.* And though he make those *Canons* but as so many *Pot-guns*, yet as great Criticks as himself esteem otherwise of them, as his *Antagonists* in that quarrel proves sufficiently. And as for that particular *Canon* which requires these offerings, it is but an exemplification or particularizing of that which is more generally prescribed by *S. Paul, Gal. 6. 6.* where he enjoyneth him that is taught to communicate to him that teacheth him, in omnibus bonis, in all his goods, as the *Rhemists* read it very rightly, and not in all good things, as our late Translation. Now this Injunction reacheth to all sorts of People, to the Poor

* *Locuples*
 & *dives*
in domini-
cum, sine
sacrificio
venis &
partem sa-
crificii
quod pau-
per obtulit
sumis.]
Cypr. de
piet. &
Eleemos.

as well as to the Rich, as it appears plainly by a passage in *S. Cyprians* works, where he upbraids a *wealthy Widow* for coming empty handed, and without her Offering to the Altar of God and eating of that part of the Sacrifice which the Poor had Offered. * To the improvement of the maintenance of him that Teacheth, not only the Rich Men were to offer out of their abundance, but the Poor Woman also was to bring her Mite. They had not else come home to *St. Paul's* Commandment, which reacheth unto all sorts of People without any exception; to every one according to that measure of Fortune which God hath given him: Which clearly sheweth, that though the payment of *Tithes* fall heavier upon Landed Men, than possibly it might do in the *Primitive times*, before the Church was in a condition to demand her Rights; yet speaking generally of the People of a Church or Parish, the charge was greater to them then, than it hath been since; the greatest numbers of the People being freed from *Tithes*, (because they have no Lands from whence *Tithes* are payable) who could not be discharged from the Communication of their Goods, and Substance without a manifest neglect of *St. Paul's* Injunction. More then this yet, besides what was communicated in a private way,
 for

for the encouragement and support of him that *Taught*; which we may well conceive to be no small matter: The publick offerings of the People were of so great consequence, as did not only serve to maintain the Bishop, according to his Place and Calling; and to provide also for the Priests or Ministers which served under him; but also to relieve the Poor and repair their Churches. † And therefore certainly the faithful of those times were generally at more Charge to maintain their Ministry, than the Subject is with us in *England*; the greatest part of which by far, pay no Tithes, at all to the Parish-Minister, and no Man any thing at all towards the maintenance of the Bishop, as in former days.

*Beda in
hystor Ec-
cles. l. 1.*

Follow we our Design through several Countries, and we shall find the Clergy of most parts in Christendom, either more plentifully endowed, or else maintained with greater Charge unto the Subject, than the Clergy of the Church of *England*. In *France*, the *Author of the Cabinet* computes the Tithes and temporal Revenues of the Clergy, besides Provisions of all sorts, to 80 Millions of Crowns; but his accompt is disallowed by all knowing Men. *Bodin* reporteth from the Mouth of *Monsieur d'Alemant*, one of the *Presidents of Accompts* in *Paris*, that they amounted to Twelve

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Millions, and 300000 of their *Livres*, which is 1230000 l. of our *English* Money; and he himself conceives that they possess Seven parts of Twelve of the whole Revenues of that Kingdom. The Book inscribed *Comment d' Estat* gives a lower estimate, and reckoning that there are in *France* Two Hundred Millions of *Arpens*, (which is a measure somewhat bigger then our Acre) assigneth 47 Millions, which is near a fourth part of the whole, to the *Gallican* Clergy. But which of these soever it be we think fit to stand to, it is resolved by them all that the *Baïse-maine*, which consists of Offerings, Churchings, Burials, *Dirges*, and such other casualties, amounteth to as much *per annum*, as their standing Rents: Upon which ground, Sir *Edwin Sandys* computeth their Revenue at six Millions yearly. In *Italy*, besides the Temporal Estate of the Popes of *Rome*, the Clergy are conceived to have in some places a third part of the whole; but in most a moiety. In *Spain*, the certain Rents of the Archbishoprick of *Toledo*, are said to be no less the 300000 Crowns *per annum*; which is far more than all the Bishops, Deans, and Prebendaries, do possess in *England*. In *Germany*, the Bishops for the most part are powerful Princes; and the Canons of some Churches of so fair an *Intrado*, and of such estimation

estimation amongst the People, that the Emperors have thought it no disparagement to them, to have a Canon's place in some of their Churches. And as for the Parochial Clergy in these three last Countries, especially in *Spain* and *Italy*, where the People are more superstitious than they be in *Germany*, there is no question but that the *Vails* and *Casualties* are as beneficial to them, as the *Baife-maine* is to the *French*.

But here perhaps it will be said that this is nothing unto us of the Realm of *England*, who have shook off the superstitions of the Church of *Rome*, and that our pains is spent but to little purpose, unless we can make good our *Thesis* in the Churches *Protestant*.

We must therefore cast about again: And First, beginning with *France*, as before we did, we shall find that those of the Reformed party there, not only pay their Tithes to the *Beneficiary*, who is presented by the Patron to the Cure or Title; or to the Church or Monastery to which the Tithes are settled by *Appropriations*; but over and above do raise an yearly maintenance for those that Minister amongst them.

As the *Irish* Papists pay their Tithes and Duties unto the Protestant Incumbent, and yet maintain their own Priests too by their Gifts and Offerings; or as the People in some places with us in *England*, do pay

their Tithes unto the Parson or Vicar whom the Law sets over them, and raise a Contribution also for their Lecturer, whom they set over themselves. In other Countries where the supream Governours are *Reformed* or *Protestant*, the case is somewhat better with the common People, although not generally so easie as with us in *England*. For there the Tithes are taken up by the Prince or State, and yearly Pensions assigned out of them to maintain the Ministers; which for the most part are so small, and so far short of a *Competency* (though by that name they love to call it) that the Subject having paid his Tithes to the Prince or State, is fain to add something out of his Purse, towards the mending of the Stipend. Besides, there being for the most part in every Church two distinct sorts of *Ministers*, that is to say, a *Pastor* who hath Cure of Souls, and performs all Ministerial Offices in his Congregation; and a Doctor (like our *English* Lectures, which took hint from hence) who only trafficketh with the Word. The Pastor receiveth his Stipend from the publick Treasury; the Doctor being maintained wholly (as I am credibly informed) at the Charge of the People; and that not only by the Bounty or Benevolence of Landed Men, but in the way of Contribution,

ion, from which no sort of People of what Rank soever, (but such as live on Alms or the Poor Man's Box) is to be exempted. But this is only in the Churches of *Calvin's* platform, those of the *Lutheran* party in *Denmark, Swedeland*, and high *Germany*, having their Tithes and Glebe as they had before; and so much more in Offerings than with us in *England*, by how much they come nearer to the Church of *Rome*, both in their Practise and Opinions, (especially in the point of the Holy Sacrament) than the *English* do. And as for our dear brethren of the *Kirk of Scotland*, who cannot be so soon forgotten by a true born *English* Man, the Tithes being settled for the most part on Religious Houses, came in their fall, unto the Crown, and out of them a third was granted to maintain their Minister; but also ill paid while the Tithes remained in the Crown, and worse when alienated to the use of private Gentlemen, that the greatest part of the burden for support of the Ministry, lay in the way of Contribution on the backs of the People. And as one ill example doth beget another, such Lords and Gentlemen as had Right to present to Churches, following the steps of those who held the Tithes from the Crown, soon made lay-fee of all the Tithes of their own

own Demesnes, and left the *Presentee* such a sorry pittance, as made him burthensome to his Neighbours for his better maintenance. How it stands with them now since these late alterations, those who have took the *National Covenant*, and I presume are well acquainted with the *Discipline* and *Estate* of the *Scottish Kirk* (which they have bound themselves to defend and keep) are better able to resolve us. And so much for the proof of the first proposition, namely, That never any Clergy in the Church of God, hath been, or is maintained with less charge of the Subject, than the establish'd Clergy of the Church of *England*. And yet the proof hereof will be more convincing, if we can bring good evidence for the Second also: Which is,

II. *That there is no Man in the Kingdom of England, who payeth any thing of his own towards the maintenance and support of his Parish Minister, but his Easter-offering.*

And that is a *Paradox* indeed, will the Reader say, Is it not visible to the Eye, that the Clergy have the tenth part of our Corn and Cattle, and of other the Increase and Fruits of the Earth? Do not the People give them the tenth part of their *Estates*, saith one of my Pamphlets? Have they not all their *livelihoods* out of our *Purses*, saith another of them? Assuredly neither
so,

nor so. All that the Clergy doth receive from the Purse of the Subject, for all the gains he takes amongst them, is Two pence or a Groat at *Easter*. He claims no more than this as due, unless the custom of the place, (as I think in some parts it is) bring it up to Six pence. If any thing be given him over this by some bountiful hand, he takes it for a favour, and is thankful for it. Such profits, as come in by *Marriages, Churchings*, and *Funeral Sermons*, as they are generally small, and but accidental; so he is bound unto some special Service and Attendance for it. His constant standing Fee, which properly may be said to come out of the Subjects Purse for the Administration of the Word and Sacraments, is nothing but the *Easter-offering*. The *Tithes* are legally his own, not given unto him by the Subject, as is now pretended, but paid unto him as a *Rent-charge* laid upon the Land; and that before the Subject, either Lord or Tenent, had any thing to do in the Land at all. For as I am inform'd by Sir Edw. Coke in his Comment upon *Littletons Tenures*, l. 1. c. 9. §. 73. fol. 58. It appeareth by the Laws and Ordinances of Ancient Kings, and specially of King Alfred, That the first King of this Realm had all the Lands of England in Demesne, and les grands manours & royalties, they reserved

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to themselves, and with the remnant they for the defence of the Realm enfeoffed the Barons of the Realm with such jurisdiction as the court Baron now hath. So he, the professed Champion of the Common laws. And at this time it was, when all the Lands in England were the Kings Demesne, that Ethelwolph, the Second Monarch of the Saxon race (his father Egbert being the first which brought the former Heptarchy under one sole Prince) conferred the Tithes of all the Kingdom upon the Church, by his Royal Charter. Of which, thus Ingulph Abbot of Crowland an old Saxon writer, * *An. 855.* (which was the 18th of his Reign) King Ethelwulph with the consent of his Prelates and Princes which Ruled in England under him in their several Provinces, did first enrich the Church of England with the Tithes of all his Lands and Goods, by his Charter Royal. Ethelward an old Saxon, and of the Blood Royal, doth express it thus: † He gave the Tithe of his possessions for the Lords own Portion, and ordered it to be so in all the parts of the Kingdom under his Command. Florence of Worcester in

* Anno
855. Rex
Ethelwul-
fus, omni-
um Præla-
torum &
Principum
suorum qui
sub ipso
variis Pro-
vinciis to-
tius Angliæ
præerant
gratuito
Consensu,
tunc primo
cum decimis
terrarum

& bonorum aliorum sive catallorum, universam dotavit Ecclesiam per suum Regnum Chirographum. Ingulph.

† Decimavit de omni possessione sua in partem Domini, & in universo regimine Principatus sui sic constituit. Ethelward.

these

these words : * King Ethelwulph for * *Ethelwulphus Rex disci-*
 the Redemption of his own Soul, and *nam toti-*
 the Soul of his Predecessors, discharg'd the *us Regni*
 tenth part of his Realm of all Tributes *sui partem,*
 and Services due unto the Crown, and by his *ab omni*
 perpetual Charter signed with the sign of the *Regali ser-*
 Cross, offered it to the three-one God. Roger *vitio &*
 of Hovenden hath it in the self same *tributo li-*
 words; and Huntingdon more briefly *beravit, &*
 thus; † That for the Love of God, and the *in sempi-*
 Redemption of his Soul, he Tithed his whole *terno Gra-*
 Dominions to the use of the Church. But *phio in*
 what need search be made into so many *Cruce*
 authors, when the Charter it self is extant *Christi,*
 in old Abbot Ingulph, and in Matthew of *pro Re-*
 Westminster, and in the Leiger book of the *demptione*
 Abbey of Abingdon? Which Charter be- *Anima sua*
 ing offered by the King on the Altar at *& Prede-*
 Winchester, in the presence of his Barons, *cessorum*
 was receiv'd by the Bishops, and by them *suorum uni*
 sent to be Publish'd in all the Churches of *& trino*
 their several Diocesses: A Clause being *Deo immo-*
 added by the King (saith the Book of A- *tavit. Flo-*
 ingdon) That whosoever added to the Gift, *rent. Wi-*
 God would please to prosper and increase his *gorne.*
 ways; but that if any did presume to diminish *† Totam*
 the same, he should be call'd to an account for it *terram su-*
am propter
amorem
Dei &
Redempti-
onem ad
opes Ec-
clesiarum
decimavit.
 Henr.

Huntingd

|| Qui augere voluerit nostram donationem, augeat omni potens Deus
 eius prosperos; si quis vero mutare vel minuire presumpserit, nos-
 se ad Tribunal Christi redditurum rationem, nisi prius satisfactionem
 eundem fecerit.

at

at Christ's judgement seat, unless he make amends by full satisfaction. In which, as in some other of the former Passages, as there is somewhat favouring of the Error of those darker times, touching the merit of good works; yet the Authorities are strong and most convincing for confirmation of the point which we have in hand.

Now that the King charged all the Lands of the Kingdom with the payment of Tithes, and not that only which he held in his own possession, is evident both by that which was said before from Sir Edward Coke, and by the several Passages of the former Authors. For if all the Lands in the Kingdom were the King's *Demesnes*, and the King conferred the Tithes of all his Lands on the Church of God, it must follow thereupon that all the Lands of the Realm were charg'd with Tithes before they were distributed amongst the Barons for defence of the Kingdom. And that the Lands of the whole Realm were thus charg'd with Tithes, as well that which was parted in the hands of Tenants, as that which was in the occupancy of the King himself, the words before alleged do manifestly evidence, where it said that he gave the *tenth of all his Lands*, as *Ingulph*; the

Tithe
ingd
lom
part o
dom,
the P
usher
Quom
parten
how
tenth
eviden
de fa
whole
that
as be
the P
Lord
havin
man
who
it see
asked
to th
a ma
ry, t
only
not
rison
and
their

Tithe of his whole Land, as *Henry of Huntingdon*; the *tenth part* of his whole Kingdom, as in *Florence of Worcester*; the *tenth part* of the Lands throughout the Kingdom, in the *Charter* it self. And finally, in the Book of *Abingdon*, the *Charter* is usher'd in with this following Title, *viz.* *Quomodo Ethelwulfus Rex dedit decimam partem regni sui Ecclesiis*, that is to say, how *Ethelwolf* gave unto the Church the *tenth part* of his Kingdom. This makes it evident, that the King did not only give *de facto*, the *Tithe* or the *Tenth part* of his whole Realm to the use of the Clergy; but that he had a Right and a Power to do it, as being not only the *Lord Paramount*, but the *Proprietary* of the whole Lands; the Lords and Great Men of the Realm not having then a Property or Estates of Permanency, but as accomptants to the King, whose the whole Land was. And though it seems by *Ingulph* their consents were asked, and that they gave a free consent to the Kings Donation; yet was this but a matter of form, and not simply necessary, their approbation and consent being only ask'd, either because the King was not willing to do any thing to the dishonour of his Crown, without the liking and consent of the Peers; or that having their consent and approbation, they should be

be barred from pleading any *Tenant-right*, and be obliged to stand in maintenance and defence thereof against all Pretenders. And this appears yet further by a Law of King *Athelstane* made in the year 930, about which time, not only the Prelates of the Church as formerly, but the Great Men of the Realm, began to be settled in Estates of Permanency, and to claim a Property in those Lands which they held of the Crown; and claiming, so begun (it seems) to make bold to subduct their Tithes. For remedy whereof, the King made this Law, commanding all his Ministers throughout the Kingdom, that in the first place they *should pay the Tithes* * of *his own Estate*, (that is to say, that which he held in his own Hands, and had not eſtated out to his Lords and Barons) and that the Bishops did the like of that which they held in right of their Churches; and his Nobles and Officers of that which they held in property, as their own Possessions or Inheritance. By which we find that Tithes were granted to the Clergy out of all the Lands in the Kingdom, and the perpetual payment of them laid as a *rent-charge* on the same, by the bounty and munificence of the first *Monarchs* of this Realm, before any part thereof was demised to others. And if perhaps some of the Great Men of

And

* *Ut im-
primis de
meo pro-
prio red-
dant Deo
decimas;
& Episco-
pi mei simi-
liter faci-
ant de suo
proprio, &
Alderman-
ni mei, &
prepositi
mei.*

the Realm had estates in *property* (as certainly there were but few, if any, which had any such Estates in the times we speak of) they charged the same with Tithes by their own consent, before they did transmit them to the Hands of the Gentry, or any who now claim to lay hold under them.

So then, the Land being charged thus with the payment of Tithes, came with this clog unto the Lords, and Great Men of the Realm ; and being so charged with Tithes by the Kings and Nobles, have been transmitted, and passed over from one hand to another, until they came to the possession of the present owners : Who whatsoever right they have to the other *nine parts*, either of Fee-simple, Lease, or Copy, have certainly none at all in the *Tithe* or *Tenth*, which is no more theirs, or to be so thought of, than the other nine parts are the Clergies. For whether they hold their Lands at an yearly Rent, or have them in Fee, or for term of Life, or in any other Tenure whatsoever it be, they hold them, and they purchased them on this tacite condition, that besides the Rents, and Services, which they pay to the Lord, they are to pay unto the Clergy, or unto them who do succeed in the Clergies right, a Tenth of all the

C

Fruits

Fruits of the Earth, and of the Fruits of their Cattel, and all Creatures Tithable, unless some Ancient Custom or Prescription do discharge them of it. And more then so, whether they hold by yearly Rent, or by right of purchase, they hold it at less Rent by far, and buy it at far cheaper rates, because the Land it self and the Stock upon it, is chargeable with Tithes, as before was said, than they would do, or could in reason think to do, were the Land free from Tithes, as in some places of this Realm it is. To make this clearer by example of an House in *London*, where, according to the Rent which this House is set at, the Minister hath 2 s. 9 d. out of every Pound in the name of a Tithe: Suppose we that the Rent of the House be 50 l. the Ministers due, according unto that proportion, comes to 6 l. 17 s. 6 d. yearly; which were it not to be paid by Law to the Parish-Minister, there is no question to be made, but that the Landlord of the House would have raised his Rent, and not content himself with the 50 l. but look for 56 l. 17 s. 6 d. which is the whole Rent paid, tho' to divers Hands. And if this House were to be sold at Sixteen years purchase, the Grantee could expect no more then 800 l because there is a Rent

of

of 6 l. 17 s. and 6 d. reserved to the Minister by Law, which is to be considered in the Sale thereof, whereas if no such Rent or Tithe were to issue out of it, he would have as many years purchase for the Sum remaining, which would inhaunce the price 110 l. higher than before it was. Now by this standard we may Judge of the case of Lands, tho' by reason of the difference of the Soil, the well or ill Husbanding of Grounds, and the greatness or smallness of the Stock, which is kept upon them, it cannot be reduced to so clear a certainty. But whatsoever the full Tithe of all be worth to the Minister, we may undoubtedly conclude, That if so much as the Tithe comes to yearly, were not paid to him, the Landlord would gain in his Rent, and the Grantee get it in the Sale: No benefit at all redounding to the Tenant by it, nor any unto him that buyeth it. Or if we will suppose with one of my Pamphlets, (and let it be supposed this once for our better proceeding) that he who officiates in a Parish where Tithes are paid in kind without any subtractions, hath the fifth part of every Landed Man's Estate, that is to say, Four Pounds in every 20 l. *per annum*: The Purchaser or Tenant, be he who he will, may positively build on this in his better

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Thoughts, that if Four Pounds in Twenty were not paid to the Minister, the Tenant must pay to his Landlord, and the Purchaser must buy it at the same rates, as he did the rest of the Land. But being that neither the Tenant pays Rent for it, nor the Purchaser hath it in his Grant from him that selleth the Land unto him, The Tithe of the Increase of their Land and Stock, and other Creatures Titheable in their possession, can be none of their own; but must be his, and only his, whom the munificence of Kings and Princes, confirmed by so many Laws and Statutes, have conferred it on. His part indeed it is, not ours, (not the *Tenth part of our Estate*, as my Pamphlet saith) and he receives it of us as a Rent or Duty, transmitted to us with the Land from one hand to another; not as a matter of Gift, or an act of Courtesy.

If then we pay not any thing of our own to the Parish-Minister, which ariseth to him from the increase of Corn and Cattel, and other Creatures Titheable by the Law of the Land, I think it cannot be affirmed by discerning Men, who are not led aside by prejudice and prepossessions, that we give any thing at all of our own unto them, more than our *Easter-offering*, be it more or less. 'Tis true, some

Statutes

Statutes have been made about the payment of *Personal* Tithes, out of the gains arising in the way of Trade : And I remember Doctor *Burges* writ a book about it, for which he is as highly Censured by the *Independant* * as for other things by those of the Prelatical party. But then I think it is as true, that either those Statutes were drawn up with such reservations, or Men of Trades have been so backward to conform unto them, that little or no benefit hath redounded by them to the Parish-Minister, more than to shew the good affections which the Parliaments of those times had unto the Clergy. And if we pay nothing of our own towards the maintenance of the Clergy, out of the increase of our Grounds and Stocks, as I have plainly proved we do not ; and that no benefit comes unto them from the gains of Trading, as I thing there comes not : If those small Vails and Casualties which redound unto them from Marriages, Churchings, and the like occasions, be given unto them for some special service which they do perform, and not for his Administration of the Word and Sacraments, I hope my Second Proposition hath been proved sufficiently, namely, that there is no Man in the Kingdom of *England* who payeth

* As in the Book called Tithe-gatherers no Gospel-officers.

any thing of his own towards the maintenance of his Parish-Minister, but his *Easter-offering*: If so, as so it is for certain, there hath been little Ground for so great a clamour, as hath been lately raised about this particular: Less reason to Subduct or to change that maintenance which the piety of our Kings have given, and the indulgence of succeeding Princes have confirm'd in Parliament, without any charge unto the Subject. Which change, tho' possibly some specious colours may be put unto it, will neither be really beneficial to the Clergy or Laity. And that conducts me on to my last Proposition, *viz.*

III. *That the change of Tithes into Stipends will bring greater trouble to the Clergy, than is yet considered; and far less profit to the Country, than is now pretended.*

This is a double Proposition, and therefore must be looked on in its several parts: First, in relation to the Clergy; whose ease is very much pretended; and next in reference to the Occupant, whose profit only is intended in the change desired. It is pretended for the Clergy * to be a very difficult thing to know the dues demandable of their several Parishes, that it maketh them too much given unto worldly things, by looking after the inning and threshing out of their Corn;

* As in the Kentish Petition and other projects of that kind.

Corn; and doth occasion many scandalous and vexatious sutes betwixt them and their Neighbours: All which they think will be avoided, in case the Ministers were reduced to some annual stipend. And to this end it is propounded by the Army in their late Proposals, that the unequal, troublesome, and contentious way of Ministers maintenance by Tithes, may be considered of, (in Parliament) and a remedy applied unto it. But under favour of the Army, and of all those who have contrived the late Petitions to that purpose, I cannot see but that the way of maintenance by annual Stipends, will be as Troublesome, Unequal, and Contentious too, as that of Tithes by Law established; especially if those annual Stipends be raised according to the platform which is now in hand. For as far as I am able to judge by that, which I have seen and heard from the chief contrivers, the design is this: A valuation to be made of every Benefice over all the Kingdom, according to the worth thereof one year with another; a yearly Summ according to that valuation to be raised upon the Lands of every Parish, which now stand chargeable with Tithes; the Money so assessed and levied, to be brought into one Common Treasury in each several County, and committed to the hands of

special Trustees hereunto appointed ; and finally, that those Trustees do issue out each half year, such allowances to the Ministers of the severall Parishes, respect being had unto the deserts of the Person and the charge of his Family, as they think fittest ; yet so, that the Improprators be first fully satisfied according to the estimate of their Tithes and Glebe. This is the substance of the project. And if the Moneys be assessed in the way proposed, only upon the *Landed Men*, whether Lords or Tenants, and not upon Artificers, Handicrafts, and Men of Mysterious Trades, who receive equal benefit by the Ministers labours, the way of maintenance by *Stipends* will be as unequal altogether, as by that of *Tithes*. And if it be but as unequal, I am sure it will be far more troublesome. For now the Minister or Incumbent hath no more to do, but to see his Corn brought in and Housed (being to be cut and cock'd to his hand both by Law and Custom) and being brought in, either to spend it in his House, or sell the residue thereof to buy other Provisions. Which if he think too great an Avocation from his Studies, he may put it over to his Wife, or some trusty Servant, as Gentlemen of greater Fortunes do unto their *Bailiffs*. And I my
self

I self know divers Clergy Men of good Note and Quality, to whom the taking up of Tithes brings no greater trouble, than once a Month to look over the accounts of their Servants: Besides, that many of them, keeping no more in their Hands, than what will serve for the necessary expence of Household, let out the rest unto some Neighbour at an yearly Rent. But when the Tithes are turned to Money, and that the Minister hath neither Corn nor Hay, nor any other Provisions of expence of Household, but what he buyeth by the Penny: What an unreasonable trouble must it needs prove to him to trudge from one Market to another, for every bit of Bread he eats, and every handful of Malt, which he is to spend? And if Corn happen to be dear, (as it is at this present) one quarter of a years Provision bought at the price of the Market, may eat out his whole years allowance. Besides, I would fain learn, for I know not yet, whether the valuation be to be made yearly, and to hold no longer than that year, or, being once agreed on, to endure for ever. If it be made from year to year; either the Minister must be at a certain trouble in driving a new bargain every year, with each several and respective Occupant within the Parish; or
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at a greater trouble in attending the Trustees of the County, till they have list and leifure to conclude it for him. But if the valuation once made be to hold for ever, which is I think the true intent of the design; I would fain know, in case the price of all Commodities should rise as much by the end of the next hundred years, as it hath done in the last, and so the next Hundreds after that; how scant a pittance the Poor Minister will have in time, for the subsistence of himself and his Family-charge. For since the 26th of King *Henry* the VIIIth, when a survey was taken of all the spiritual promotions in this Kingdom, and the clear yearly value of each returned into the Court of the *Exchequer*, the prices of Commodities have been so inhaunced, thro' the encrease of Coin, that had not Benefices been improved proportionably, but held unto the valuation which is there recorded, the Ministry in general had been so poor, so utterly unable to have gone to the price of the Markets, that many must have digged, or begged for an hungry livelyhood.

And yet we do not see an end of the mischeif neither; for when the Tithes are changed to a Summ of Mony, and the Mony brought into a common Bank or Treasury, the Minister will be sure to undergo

dergo a certain loss, and be vexed with more uncertain troubles. For when this *Clergy-Office* is once erected and settled in a constant course or method, as all Offices be; there must be *Treasurers, Receivers, Tellers, Auditors*, besides under-officers, in each several County; every of which will look to have some benefit by his Place and Office, if not his whole Subsistence by it: And I would fain know of these grand Projectors, by that time every one of these Cooks hath licked his Fingers, and each *Cerberus* hath had his Mouthful, how pitifully short the Commons must needs prove to the hungry Clergy, who are to live on the remainder: Now as the loss is more than certain, so will the trouble be as great as the loss, and no less certain too, though it be uncertain. For when the Poor Clergy-man hackneyeth to receive his *Stipend*, how many put-offs shall he find, ere he speed of his business. For either *Mr. Treasurer is not at leisure, or the Mony is not yet come in, or better Men than he must be sped before him*; and having danced a Fortnight in this attendance, may possibly be forced to a composition, and take Eggs for his Mony, or else pay very dearly for his expedition. Such courses have been formerly complained of, in the King's *Exchequer*; *Committees* in the Country

try are not free from the like complaints; and much I fear, least this new Office prove as full of delays and trouble (for the best of us are but Men, and subject to corrupt affections) as either of the others have been found to be. But then, if Mr. *Treasurer* have a further Power either of Augmentation or of Diminution, according as he judgeth of the Ministers diligence, or looks upon him in Respect of his Charge and Family, What a base Vassalage and Thralldom must the Poor Clergy-man be brought to, in having such a Super-Intendent to judge of his Parts and Diligence, or to assign him an Allowance for his Wife and Children? How punctually must Mr. *Treasurer* be attended and crouched unto, gifted, and bribed from time to time, either in hope to have the yearly *Stipend* mended, or else for fear to have it lessen'd? The *Chancellors* were thought to Lord it with too high an insolency, when the Poor Country Minister did appear before them. But these who are to bear the Bag, and upon whom the Clergy must depend for a poor Subsistence, will be sure to Lord it over them with contempt enough; more than the *Chancellor* or *Bishop* in the worst times of their Government: In case at last they do not like *Judas* think all wast which is given to *Christ*, under pre-
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tence of keeping it for more *Pious uses*. And what a trouble and vexation to ingenious minds this must needs be thought, let the Reader judge.

So then, the way of Ministers maintenance by yearly *Stipends* being as unequal, and more troublesome than that of *Tithes*, let us next see whether it may not prove as contentious also. 'Tis true indeed, there have been many suits in the Courts of *Westminster*, between some *Incumbents* and their Neighbours about matter of *Tithes*; but if it be examined where the fault lieth most, I doubt it will be rather found to proceed out of Covetousness in some Parishioners, than any difficulty in discovering the demandable dues, or any contentions in the Ministers. For many Country People reckoning all good gains of which they can defraud the Parson, are apt enough on all occasions to subduct their *Tithes*, and either to pretend *Customs*, or plead *Prescriptions*, to decline the payment. And though they commonly attempt it first in such trifling matters, as are not considerable in themselves, and would bring a Scandal on the Minister, should he be too strict, and trouble them for matters of so slight a nature; yet when he looks upon the consequent, and that the withholding or subducting

ducting of those *petit Tithes*, is but to make a way for the rest to follow; he finds more reason to insist on a punctual payment, than otherwise the nature of the thing would bear. And if a Suit insue upon it, I see not why it should be charged upon the Minister, who is accomptable to God, the Church, and his whole succession for any diminution of the Churches Rights, by his remissness or connivence. But wheresoever the fault lies, *contentious suits* do sometimes happen, there is no question of it: And can we think *contentions* will not also rise about the payment of the *Stipends*? Some Men conceive themselves to be over-rated, others are apt enough to think that the Tradesman who gets more by his Shop, than they do by the Plough, should be as liable as themselves to this common burden; and some believing that no *Tithes* are due at all, will neither pay in kind, or Mony. Some course must then be taken to inforce a payment, where payment is denyed upon these Pretensions; and there is no compulsive Course without some Contention: And then supposing that some Course must be taken to inforce a payment, (as I can see no hope how it will be avoided) I would next know by whom this Course must be pursued: If by the Trustees for the County,

y, they will be like to prove but ill Solicitors in another Man's business, as being to get nothing but their pains for their labour; besides that, spending, as they must, on the common Stock (and Men we know, are very apt to cut large Thongs out of another Man's Leather) the Bill of Charges for one Suit, may possibly devour the Fruits of the whole Benefice. If by the Minister himself, as it is most likely, we are but where we were before, and by avoiding one *contention* for *Tithes* in kind, the Minister must be engaged in another for *Tithes* in Mony, which comes all to one. For that such suits will follow on this Alteration, I look on as a matter unavoidable; considering especially, how infinitely the Country-man, who aims at nothing in the change but his gain or profit, will find himself deceived of his expectation, and consequently will be more stubborn, and untractable when he seeth his Error.

For that the change of *Tithes* into *annual Stipends* will not be so much unto his profit as he doth expect, and hath been intimated to him by some leading Men, who have the hammering of the Plot, will be no hard matter to demonstrate. I know that nothing is pretended openly in the Alteration, but that the Occupant may have

have his *Tithes* at a certain Rent ; and not be troubled to expect till the Parson comes to set out his Dues. But I know too, that generally they have been fed with a secret hope, That if the Parliament prevailed in the present War, they then should pay no *Tithes* at all ; but every Man of what Estate or Trade soever, should be contributory to the Charge of the Ministers maintenance. Just so the Prince of Orange dealt with the *Boors* of *Holland* : Assuring them, that if they prospered in the War against the King of *Spain* (which was then in hand) they should pay no *Tithes* unto their Minister ; and in the mean time that the *Tithes* should be taken up towards the maintenance of the War for the common Liberty. But when the War was brought to so fair an issue, that the *Boor* thought to be exempted from the payment of *Tithes* : Answer was made, That they should pay none to the Minister as they had done formerly, whereby their Ministers in effect were become their Masters ; but that the *Tithes* were so considerable a Revenue, that the State could not possibly subsist without them ; that therefore they must be content to pay them to the *States Commissioners*, as they had done hitherto, and that the State would take due care to maintain a Ministry. By means where

whereof, they do not only pay their *Tithes*, as in former times ; but seeing how short the publick allowance made their Ministers, doth come of that which some are pleased to call a Competency, they are constrained (as it were) out of common Charity, if not compelled thereto by Order, to contribute over and above, with the rest of the People, for the improvement and increase of the Ministers Pension. And so it was in *Scotland* also, after the *Lords of new erection* had ingrossed the *Tithes*. I cannot say that there is any such design as to annex the *Tithes* to the Crown, (though if they be taken from the Clergy, they ought of common right to return again unto the Crown, from whence they came) but I dare say the *Land-holder* will conceive himself as much defrauded of his Expectation, as if there was : And when he finds, that instead of paying no *Tithes* at all, he is to pay a valuable consideration in Money for them, will think himself so far from being beholding to the Undertakers of this Project, that he will think the old way better, and more easie to him. His Money he accompts his own, and parts as gladly from it as from so much of his Blood. The *Tithes* he looks upon as another Mans, which never were in his possession, or to be reckoned of as a part of himself ; and

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therefore lets them go without grief or trouble. And I have mark'd it commonly amongst my Neighbours (who I believe are of the same Temper with other Occupants) that the same Men who took no thought for parting with their *Tithes* in kinds, having compounded for them at a rate in Mony, invented more delays, and made more excuses, to put the payment off for a Week or Two, and so from one Day to another, than for the payment of their *Tithes* in all their Life time. So dear a thing is Mony to us Country people, that he who shall perswade us to redeem a supposed inconvenience with a real and a constant expence of Treasure, will be counted but an evil Counsellor. A visible evidence whereof we have now amongst us : For though the *quartering of Soldiers* be the heaviest bondage that ever a free-born People did languish under, and such as Men of Means and Quality would buy out upon any Terms : Yet generally the Country-man had rather make himself a Slave, and his Wife a Drudge, and let them spend upon his Victuals, than part with Mony to remove them to some other place. My inference hereupon is this ; either the valuation of each several Benefice will be true and real to the worth, or not. If not, it may redound indeed to the Ploughman's

man's profit, but then it comes accompanied with a publick fraud, which I believe no Christian State will be guilty of. And on the other side, if the Rates be made according to the full worth of the Benefice, it will be little to the profit of the Husbandman, who might have Farmed his *Tithes* as cheap of the Parson or Vicar; besides the hearts grief it will be unto many of them to part with ready Mony for a thing of convenience, without which they might live as happily as their Fathers did.

And if it be not to the profit of the Poughman this way, I am sure that in another way it will not be to his content or his profit either. For taking it for granted, as I think I may, that I have hit on the design which is now on foot, that is to say, that the yearly profits of each Benefice in every County, be brought into one common Bank or Treasury within the County, and then disposed of by Trustees, according as they judge of the deserts of the Person, and take into consideration his Family-charge; It may so happen (and will doubtless) that in a Parish where the Tax or Sessment cometh to 400*l. per annum*, the Minister may not be allow'd above an Hundred. The residue will be wholly in Mr. *Treasurers*

Power, either to feast with his Friends, or lay up for his Children; or at the best to settle it on such who relate unto him, or can make Means and Friends to enlarge their Pensions, though such perhaps as were never seen nor heard of by the Parish, whence the Money comes. And if Men think it as it is, an ill piece of Husbandry, to have the Soil carried off their own Land, and laid on anothers, to the impoverishing of their own, and enriching of his: I cannot see but that it will be thought a worse piece of Husbandry, and prove of very ill digestion to most Country Stomacks; to have the Fat of their Livings carried to another place, and given unto a Man whom they never saw, and who is never like to feed their Souls with the Bread of Life, or their Bodies with the Life of Bread: Their own Poor Minister mean while, from whom they have reason to expect it, being so discouraged and impoverish'd that he can do neither. For whereas those who were possessed of the richer Benefices, did use to keep good Hospitality, to entertain their Neighbours and relieve their Poor, and do many other good offices amongst them as occasion served, both to the benefit and comfort of all sorts of *Parishioners*: It may so happen, and it will (as before I said) that the Minister may

be so ill befriended by Mr. *Treasurer*, and the rest of the *Trustees* for the County, that instead of being either a benefit or a comfort to them in the way proposed, he may prove a burden, and a charge. And though I doubt not but as great care will be taken, as can be desired in the choice of those who are to have the disposing of the publick Monies; yet to suppose that Men once settled in an Office of such Trust and Power, may not be subject unto partialities and corruptions, were an imagination fitter for the Lord Chancellor *Verulam's* new *Atlantis*, or Sir *Thomas More* his Predecessor's old *Utopia*, or a *Platonick* Common-Wealth; than the best tempered Government in the Christian World. For my part, looking into the design with the best Eyes I have, and judging of it by the clearest light of Understanding, which God hath given me, I am not able to discern, but that the change of *Tithes* into *Stipends* (in the way propounded) will bring greater trouble to the Clergy than is yet consider'd; and far less profit to the Country than is now pretended: Which is the Third and last of my Propositions, and is, I hope, sufficiently and fully proved, or at the least made probable if not demonstrative

I have said nothing in this Tract of the right of *Tithes*, or on what motive or considerations

siderations of preceeding claim, the Kings of *England* did confer them upon the Clergy: Contenting my self at this time with the *matter of Fact*, as namely, That they were settled on the Church by the Kings of this Realm, before they granted out Estates to the Lords and Gentry, and that the Land thus charged with the payment of *Tithes*, they passed from one Man to another, until it came unto the Hands of the present Occupant; which cuts off all that Claim or Title which the misperfwaded Subject can pretend unto them. I know it cannot be denied but that notwithstanding the said Grants and Charters of those Ancient Kings, many of the Great Men of the Realm; and some also of the inferiour Gentry possessed of Manours, before the *Lateran* Council, * did either keep their *Tithes* in their own Hands, or make infeodations of them to Religious Houses, or give them to such Priests or Parishes, as they best affected. But after the Decree of Pope *Innocent* the III^d. (which you may find at large in Sir *Edw. Cokes* Comment upon *Magna Charta*, and other old Statutes of this Realm in the Chapter of *Tithes*) had been confirmed in that Council (*Anno. 1215*) and incorporated into the Canons and conclusions of it, the payment of them to the Minister, or Parochial

* *Ante Concilium Lateranen-
se, bene poterant Lai-
ci decimas sibi in feu-
dum retinere, vel
aliis quibuscunque
Ecclesiis dare.* Lind-
wood in *Provinc.
cap de decimis.*

chial Priest, came to be settled universally over all the Kingdom: Save that the *Templars*, the *Hospitalers*, and *Monks* of *Cisteaux* held their ancient priviledges of being excepted for those Lands which they held in occupancy from this general rule. Nor have I said any thing of *Impropriations*; partly, because I am perswaded that the Lords and Gentry, who have their *Votes* or *Friends* in *Parliament*, will take care to the saving of their own Stakes; but principally, because coming from the same original Grant from the King to the Subjects, and by them settled upon Monasteries and Religious Houses, they fell in the ruin of those Houses to the Crown again (as of due right the *Tithes* should do, if they be taken from the Clergy;) and by the Crown were alienated in due form of Law, and came by many mean conveyances to the present Owners. Only I shall desire, that the Lords and Commons would take a special care of the Churches Patrimony, for fear lest that the prevalency of this evil humour which gapes so greedily after the *Clergies Tithes*, do in the end devour theirs also. And it concerns them also in relation to their right of Patronage, which if this Plot go on, will be utterly lost, and Churches will no longer be presentative at the choice of the *Patron*; but
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either made Elective at the will of the People, or else Collated by the Trustees of the several Counties (succeeding as they do in the Power of Bishops) as now Committee-men dispose of the preferments of the sequestred Clergy. If either by their Power and Wisdom, or by the Arguments and Reasons which are here produced, the Peoples Eyes are opened to discern the Truth, and that they be deceived no longer by this popular Error, it is all I aim at, who have no other ends herein, but only to *undeceive them in this point of Tithes*; which hath been represented to them as a publick grievance conducing manifestly to the diminution of their Gain and Profit. If notwithstanding all this care for their information, they will run headlong in the ways of *spoil and sacrilege*, and shut their Eyes against the light of the Truth, shine it never so brightly; Let them take heed they fall not into that infatuation which the Scripture denounceth, that *seeing they shall see, but shall not perceive*; and that the stealing of this *Con* from the *Altars* of God, burn not down their Houses. And so I shut up this discourse with the words of our Saviour, saying, that *no Man tasteth New Wine, but presently he saith, that the Old is better.*

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